

COMMUNIST AND NATIONALIST

by

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INTRODUCTION

The term ideology may be used to describe either communism or nationalism. Both are essentially belief systems which consist of a particular mode of thought and result in a unique manner of viewing reality. Both the communist and nationalist offer ready solutions to complex problems, claim prophetic abilities and promise improvement in the human condition. Both political theories exhibit the common, ideological characteristic of reinforcement, i.e. their adherents tend to interpret events in such a way as to strengthen their faith in the system whether the actual phenomena are, in fact, compatible with that system or not. As is usually the case with ideologies, they are also mutually exclusive. Whereas the communist would improve matters through changes in human nature aimed at the eventual homogenization of mankind, the nationalist hopes to achieve better conditions or maintain the status quo by either preserving the differences which exist between his and other nationalities or offering others the apparent benefits of his own system. The communist promises that the world-wide acceptance of his political theory will result in the removal of all material deprivation and predicts an end to international and local strife. The nationalist, on the other hand, offers greater wealth and the protection of the interests of his own people either through achieving or

maintaining national independence.

The incompatible nature of these two ideologies would warrant the conclusion that the nationalist and communist would be inalterably opposed. In a world system of nation-states, based on nationalistic motives, a great power which had adopted the communist ideology would theoretically be forced to conduct its foreign policy in a most inimical environment. In fact, the Soviet Union with its communist ideology finds allies and the communism gains adherents among the strongly nationalistic peoples of Asia, Africa and South America.

There are many reasons for this apparent contradiction. The recognition of the bolshevik regime by other governments, admission of the U.S.S.R. to the League of Nations and the subsequent recognition of the satellite regimes together with their admission to the United Nations have all served to confer historical legitimacy on communist states and minimize the dangers to the national independence of others. Many economically backward nationalities look to the U.S.S.R. as a successful, developing country in contrast to those who have already reached an advanced stage of development. The affluence of many western states, flagrantly advertised in commodity sales promotion, and the relatively lower standard of living enjoyed in the Soviet Union tend to polarize economic

issues into a seeming alliance of rich against poor. Western aid efforts, although occasionally well planned and executed, are frequently unable to generate a sufficiently rapid change to meet the aspirations of people with serious economic problems.

The causes mentioned above may be categorized as externalities in the sense that they all function in such a way as to create a favorable environment for Soviet foreign policy efforts at minimizing the disparity between their own system and the aspirations of the nationalist. These endeavors include support of independence movements on a selective basis, an economic assistance program in opposition to western aid activities, and a massive propaganda offensive designed to nullify any amicable attitudes toward the West while simultaneously presenting the Soviet Union as the champion of the weak and oppressed. Animosity toward the western powers is generated through repetitious accusations of capitalistic imperialism and neo-colonialism. The benevolence of the Soviet Union is demonstrated by issuing proclamations in support of national independence and freedom of self-determination. The charges of capitalistic exploitation are often accepted in underdeveloped nations since they provide a ready explanation for the economic ills found there. Self-determination is precisely the political commodity which the nationalist seeks.

These two propaganda themes result in an effective and versatile policy tool.

There have been many studies published on Soviet nationality policies. Some authors investigate the history of the U.S.S.R. in its dealings with minority peoples and lesser nations. Others take the theoretical approach and examine the Marxist-Leninist doctrines on the subject. However, I would argue that these works suffer from a common weakness. This should not be construed as a deficiency of scholarly application or incisive analysis. The problem lies in the need for evaluation and measurement against a standard. Since the yardstick for choosing and judging events or doctrinal statements is usually the value system of the author, his arguments and conclusions often lose their persuasive force when considered by individuals whose value orientation differs. For this reason, the following essay pursues a separate course. I have attempted the comparison of a model of the nationalists' ideology with the chronological development of the communist ideology. This system is by no means novel in any way other than the choice of subject for its application. Karl Mannheim was, to the best of my knowledge, its founder.¹ Employed correctly, its advantages lie in the lessening of

¹Karl Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1951)

the number of value-judgements made on the basis of the author's own philosophy alone and by highlighting the occasions when such decisions are made out of necessity.

The purpose of the essay, as already implied, is to dispel the illusion that there is any similarity between the two plans for advancing human welfare even though the communist doctrine has been periodically modified in order to permit a wide variety of apparent concessions to the nationalist. These nominal concessions, which arise from necessity or expediency, disappear whenever the political environment permits the communist to execute policy from a position of unchallenged supremacy.

I.

The Marxist Theory of Nationalism

The word nationalism has been used to describe a great many movements including patriotism, imperialism and racism. This varied usage, together with the fact that nationalism has been extolled and condemned, requires some clarification of the term. Boyd C. Shafer has analyzed the classical and more recent scholarly works devoted to the subject. Shafer concludes that there are ten, common, identifiable characteristics of nationalism and lists them as follows:

1. A certain defined (often vaguely) unit of territory (whether possessed or coveted).
2. Some common cultural characteristics such as language (or widely understood languages), customs, manners and literature (folk tales and lore are a beginning). If an individual believes he shares these, and wishes to continue sharing them, he is usually said to be a member of the nationality.
3. Some common dominant social (as Christian) and economic (as capitalistic or recently communistic) institutions.
4. A common independent or sovereign government (type does not matter) or the desire for one. The "principle" that each nationality should be separate and independent is involved here.
5. A belief in a common history (it can be invented) and in a common origin (often mistakenly conceived to be racial in nature).
6. A love or esteem for fellow nationals (not necessarily as individuals).

7. A devotion to the entity (however little comprehended) called the nation, which embodies the common territory, culture, social and economic institutions, government, and the fellow nationals, and which is at the same time (whether organism or not) more than their sum.
8. A common pride in the achievements (often the military more than the cultural) of this nation and a common sorrow in its tragedies (particularly its defeats).
9. A disregard for or hostility to other (not necessarily all) like groups, especially if these prevent or seem to threaten the separate national existence.
10. A hope that the nation will have a great and glorious future (usually in territorial expansion) and become supreme in some way (in world power if the nation is already large).¹

With these characteristics as an aid, nationalism may be broadly defined as the opinion that the people, language, culture and tradition of one's own nationality are of an equal or preferable quality to those of others and that the nationality should therefore exist as a separate entity and freely determine its own destiny. This is the concept of the nationalist ideology employed for purposes of comparison in the remainder of this essay.

The Marxist theory places opinions and ideas of this type, along with all others, in the category of socio-politi-

¹Boyd C. Shafer, "Toward a Definition of Nationalism" in James N. Rosenau, Ed., International Politics and Foreign Policy (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1961) pp. 301-313.

cal superstructure which arises from a particular type of economic mode of production. An understanding of this relationship between perception and the production of physical goods is essential in order to grasp the nature of the basic conflict between nationalism and communism.

When Marx rejected the idealist philosophy of Hegel and embraced materialism, it was necessary that he explain the material source of ideas. His answers, set forth in The German Ideology, may be briefly summarized in the following manner.² In order for primitive man to continue to exist, it was necessary that he fulfill the physical demands which existence dictated. These needs were of two types. Man required food, clothing and shelter and, at the same time, it was necessary for him to begin to propagate. In satisfying these two conditions, man developed a dual relationship, one with nature, the other with his fellow men. The second, reproductive relationship was itself a productive force in that consciousness and language were derived from it. Marx taught that it was this consciousness which distinguished man from animals who had no similar awareness of their relationship with others of their species. Even in man, this primitive con-

²Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964) Chapter I entitled "Feuerbach" contains the explanation of the ideal, the alienation of man and the source of national differences.

sciousness was, at first, only of a sheep-like or tribal kind. Its further development resulted from increased productivity, increased needs and, what was essential to both, the corresponding increase in population. This evolutionary process continued until the additional complexity of the social relationship had generated a sufficient productive force for man's mind to conceive something without conceiving something which existed in the material world. Consciousness, thus freed from the physical, was then capable of proceeding to pure theory and forming a social superstructure of ethics, law, religion, government, etc.

The preceding explanation of man's abstract abilities offers no reasons for any disparity in ideas. Marx resolved this problem with a parallel, dialectical argument. He stated that while consciousness was evolving from the social relationship, the production of sustenance had also undergone change. Because of natural predisposition, strength or dexterity, labor had become specialized. Some men became shepherds or farmers while others hunted or fished. This division of labor meant that man became an interdependent rather than a self-sufficient entity.³ This mutual reliance on others of the

³Solomon F. Bloom describes the Marxist teaching on the basic similarities and superstructural differences of mankind in his book, The World of Nations (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941) Chps. 1 and 2. Bloom uses the categories of "generic" and "historical" man respectively rather than basic and superstructural.

group, which Marx called Communal interest, inevitably conflicted with the interests of the individual or family and resulted in alienation. The first, true division of labor occurred when mental and physical activities devolved on different individuals. From then on, one or another group of reasoning specialists in the community would seize control of the means for production of the basic goods and dominate it in order to promote their interests with the consequent exploitation of the remainder of the community. Since this ruling class controlled the means of physical production, they would also be able to dominate the social relationships and, consequently, the production of ideas. The ideas would become those of the rulers and pave the way for further conflicts. The ideal world would remain under the sway of the rulers and develop according to their wishes. Meanwhile the mode of physical production would undergo change and continue to progress until a contradiction resulted between the new mode of production and the ideas of the old ruling class. The entire social relationship would become a hindrance to further advances in the production of commodities. Marx summarized this historical progression in the introduction to his Contribution to the Critique of the Political Economy.

"In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, these rela-

tions of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society - the real foundation, on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or - what is but a legal expression for the same thing - with the property relations within which they had been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters."⁴

The retarding influences of the social relationships would eventually result in the overthrow of the old rulers by those who were able to dominate under the new conditions of production. As production methods improved, similar situations repeatedly and inevitably arose. These cycles served to explain all of man's history up to the time when Marx discovered the laws of social behavior (pre-historical period).⁵

⁴Karl Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (New York: The International Library Publishing Co., 1904) pp. 11-12.

⁵According to Marx, productive methods inevitably improved as man's needs increased. These evolutions took place naturally, i.e., they were not subordinate to the general plan of freely combined individuals. Until a communal plan could be executed in the interest of all individuals, periodic revolutions would occur (Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, pp. 88-91).

The same conflicts of interest which caused differences of opinion and class struggle within a community also accounted for inter-community discord. Just as the socio-political superstructure of a group of people inevitably came into contradiction with the economic base of that group, the superstructures of various peoples would also conflict. This was caused by differences in the mode of physical production in dissimilar locales. Because of the diverse, natural, environmental conditions, the manner in which man procured the physical necessities of life would contrast and result in the domination by heterogeneous classes. For example, capitalism and the corresponding domination of the bourgeoisie class could only occur in temperate climes.⁶ Conversely, the natural abundance of the tropics would preclude the necessary initiative for advancement to a modern industrial mode of production. Since the various peoples had dissimilar economic bases and were dominated by various classes, their superstructures also differed.

"The relations of different nations among themselves depends upon the extent to which each has developed its productive forces, the divisions of labour and internal intercourse."⁷

⁶Karl Marx, Capital (Chicago, Ill.: Charles H. Kerr and Company, 1909) Vol. I, pp. 562-565.

⁷Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology, p. 32.

Because the ruling class interests dominated, they were promoted as the national interests. Marx's central preoccupation with the process of domination explains his lack of precision in the usage of the terms nation, nationality, state, country and society. All could be used to indicate a group of peoples whose mode of production had led to domination by a class along with the ideas of that class. This same idea of class struggle and domination was the foundation of Marxist international theory. The ruling classes of nations with an advanced mode of production eventually dominated less progressive countries and exploited them as they did their own people.

Although careless in the use of terminology, Marx took considerable pains to outline the way in which the conflicts between nations arose. According to his theory, this contradiction was a slow and gradual development and the advent of manufacture marked its beginnings.⁸ When the guilds of the feudal system gave way to manufacture and the manufacturing middle class, trade took on a political significance.⁹ The conflicting interests of the various peoples were reflected in the competition for markets. Further improve-

⁸Ibid., pp. 88-89

⁹Ibid., p. 71

ments in technology exacerbated these antagonisms. Beginning in the middle of the seventeenth century, commerce and navigation began to outstrip manufacture and colonies were founded, which became consumers. As a result, the competitive struggle among the more civilized nations increased.¹⁰ The rise of machine production made the competition even more fierce. A modern, industrial mode of production created the most severe contradictions of any previous historical epoch.

"Finally, modern industry and the opening of the world market made the struggle universal and at the same time gave it an unheard-of virulence. Advantages in natural or artificial conditions of production now decide the existence or non-existence of individual capitalist, as well as of whole industries and countries. He that falls is remorselessly cast aside."¹¹

While these advances in the mode of production were occurring, there were corresponding shifts in the socio-political superstructures. Some nations became centralized and others were subjugated.

"Just as it [bourgeoisie] has made the country dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilized ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeoisie, the East on the West. More and more the bourgeoisie continues to do away with the scattered state of population, means of production, and property. It has ag-

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 72-73

¹¹Friedrich Engels, Socialism: Utopian and Scientific in Arthur P. Mendel, Ed., Essential Works of Marxism (New York/Toronto/London: Bantam Books, 1961) p. 70.

glomerated population, centralized means of production, and concentrated property in a few hands. The necessary consequence of this was political centralization. Independent, or but loosely connected, provinces with separate interests, laws, governments and systems or taxation, became lumped together into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class-interest, one frontier and one customs-tariff."¹²

Marx also described how the bourgeoisie gained their ruling class position and just how thorough their domination was.

"Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance of that class. An oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility, an armed and self-governing association in the medieval commune. At first, an independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany) or a taxable "third estate" of the monarchy (as in France), afterwards, in the period of manufacture proper, serving either the semi-feudal or the absolute monarchy as a counterpoise against the nobility, and, in fact, cornerstone of the great monarchies in general, the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of modern industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative State, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie."¹³

At this point, with only the investigation of Marx's basic ideas on nations and international conflict completed, there are several doctrines with which the nationalist could

¹²Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party (New York: International Publishers, 1948) p. 13.

¹³Ibid., pp. 10-11

not agree. Recalling Shafer's listing which was quoted earlier, the contradictions become quite evident. If the Marxist theory is accepted, the nationalist belief in common culture, language, custom, manner and literature is purely illusory. These devices are only methods which present or former rulers have fashioned, through the control of the production of ideas, in order to maintain a portion of the nationality in a dependent role. Furthermore, any change in the economic system will result in their loss when the entire superstructure shifts. The same may be said for common social institutions such as religions or tribal bonds. Belief in a common origin and history or pride in national achievements must also be interpreted as foolishness. Marx taught that mankind began as a mass of individuals without any significant differentiation. Distinctions eventually resulted from purely environmental conditions which caused variations in the division of labor. History, until Marx's discoveries, was a series of inevitable occurrences which man had no means to control. The past national achievements of any but a socialistically directed country had to have resulted on a similar non-volitional basis. One can hardly take pride in accidents.

There is one further consideration. Marx's argument casts the nationalist himself in a most unfavorable role. If a member of an economically advanced nation, he is, by definition,

of the oppressor, bourgeoisie class. If his nation is backward or oppressed, the nationalist is then a member of some former ruling class who is seeking to restore his dominant position over his fellow nationals. There are no other roles available in the Marxist script.

The arguments presented here are all based on doctrines which have not and indeed can never be abandoned by those who adhere to the Marxist teachings. The entire communist ideology crumbles if any of the dogmas such as the division of labor, the alienation of man, the association of economic base and superstructure or the class struggle are removed. This fact casts serious doubt on the validity of any communist recognition of national independence or self-determination and only the most basic tenets have been reviewed.

II.

The Revolutionary Strategy

The Marxist theory attributes all exploitation and resultant hardship to the division of labor and the consequent class struggles. The problem could be eliminated by doing away with the division and Marx taught that the same, modern industry which had caused the serious nature of the conflict also contained the elements of the solution.

The bourgeoisie was causing the homogenization of nationalities in their efforts at extending their industrial mode of production to all corners of the world.

"National differences and antagonisms between peoples are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world market, to uniformity in the mode of production and in the conditions of life corresponding thereto."¹

This passage and the famous statement that the workingman has no country are frequently cited as evidence that Marx was unconcerned with national issues. In light of the works reviewed earlier in this essay and subsequent paragraphs of the Communist Manifesto itself, such an inference is not only unfounded but leads to misinterpretation of Marx's revolutionary strate-

¹Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, p. 28. A modern mode of production was able to negate the natural, environmental conditions which had caused the earlier, uneven development of production since modern industry signified man's domination of nature. "In proportion as industry advances, natural limits recede." (Karl Marx, Capital, Vol. III, p. 565)

gy. The spread of a single mode of production might result in similarities among the cultural, social and political superstructures of various nations but, so long as the division of labor remained, the bourgeoisie would continue to promote their class interests through the state governments they controlled and these interests would conflict with the bourgeoisie interests of other nations.

"Generally speaking, big industry created everywhere the same relations between the classes of society, and thus destroyed the peculiar individuality of the various nationalities. And finally, while the bourgeoisie of each nation still retained separate national interests, big industry created a class, which in all nations has the same interest and with which nationality is already dead; a class which is really rid of all the old world and at the same time stands pitted against it. Big industry makes for the worker not only the relation to the capitalist, but labour itself, unbearable."²

It was this homogeneous class, the proletariat, which was to seize control of modern industry and operate it for the benefit of the workers. Then the mode of production would be operating in the interests of the total community (all those who worked) for the first time since the primitive tribal period and the division of labor would be ended.

The fact that the bourgeoisie retained their differences provided the unified proletariat with a divided enemy in

²Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology, p. 76. My italics.

the revolutionary struggle. Bourgeois inter-nation struggles also resulted in opportunities for the political education of the proletarian class.

"The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle. At first with the aristocracy; later, with those portions of the bourgeoisie itself, whose interest have become antagonistic to the progress of industry; at all times, with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for its help, and thus, to drag it into the political arena. The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie."³

Marx did not picture an army of West European workers attacking first one and then another national bourgeoisie. The revolutionary battle was to be fought out within the national framework, e.g. German against German, Englishman against Englishman.

"Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie."⁴

The national character of the revolutionary struggle received further clarification.

³Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, pp. 18-19.

⁴Ibid., p. 20

"Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself the nation, it is to this extent itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word."⁵

It is quite clear that Marx was predicting a country by country battle. This fact is, at first, quite surprising since it appears to remove any advantage gained from the carefully constructed argument for a divided bourgeoisie. If the Marxist interpretation of man's early history is accepted, his demand for an intra-national revolution seems self-contradictory. Previous changes in ruling classes supposedly had resulted from advances in the mode of production. Since the bourgeoisie class was the one which dominated with a modern, industrial base, they should have continued to dominate until some new and advanced mode arose. Marx provided the answer to this problem. The proletariat required an international coordinating committee, the communist party, to present the bourgeoisie with a united front.

"The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only:
1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the fore the common interests of the entire proletariat, independent of all nationality. 2. In the various stages of development through which

⁵Ibid., p. 28

the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole."⁶

The emphasis placed on the national nature of the revolutionary struggle was not to be interpreted as advocating a sequential revolutionary progression. In order for the dictatorship of the proletariat to become permanent, it would have to be established more or less simultaneously in several of the advanced countries. Unless this happened, the newly established socialist states would lack a sufficient power base to defeat the forces of the greedy bourgeoisie of the nations which failed to succumb. In a letter to Engels in 1858, Marx wondered whether a socialist revolution of the Western European nations would be successful or if it might instead be crushed since the bourgeoisie elsewhere was still on the ascendent.⁷ By 1882, in a letter to Kautsky, Engels had decided that once Europe and North America were reorganized, the resulting colossal power would be enough to achieve a permanent success.⁸

⁶Ibid., p. 22

⁷Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Correspondence 1846-1895 (New York: International Publishers, 1934) Letter No. 42, pp. 117-118.

⁸Ibid., Letter No. 177, p. 399

The insistence that there was a need for a multi-national effort and the fact that some nations would not have progressed sufficiently to generate the necessary, revolutionary impetus raises two questions. First, what form would the multi-national, inter-socialist organization take? Second, what was to be its relationship with the unreorganized nations? Marx and Engels did not provide an answer to the first of these problems although one was required since, according to the theory, all differences would not have ceased to exist at the time the revolution occurred. While they stated that such national peculiarities were daily lessened by the bourgeoisie, it was only the proletariat which would complete the process after the revolt.

"The supremacy of the proletariat will cause them [national differences] to vanish still faster In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end."⁹

Marx's followers were left to work out the final solution to this problem.

The second question of post-revolutionary relationships received a little more consideration. In his letter to Kautsky,

⁹Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, p. 28

Engels states that defensive wars on the part of the socialist countries will almost certainly be required because of external bourgeois avarice. However, he goes on to say that offensive struggles to extend the revolutionary influence would not be necessary nor desirable since to do so would undermine the ability of the new organization to attract others by example.

"Once Europe is reorganized, and North America that will furnish such colossal power and such an example that the semi-civilized countries will follow in their wake of their own accord. Economic needs alone will be responsible for this One thing alone is certain: the victorious proletariat can force no blessings of any kind upon any foreign nation without undermining its own victory by so doing. Which of course by no means excludes defensive wars of various kinds."¹⁰

The open conflict between the communist plan for the abolition of man's injustice to man and the aspirations of the nationalist are vividly disclosed in the previous passages. The nationalist is an enemy before the revolution occurs and a subversive afterwards. Although the exact method which the proletariat is to employ in sweeping away the last vestiges of national differences is unexplained, there appears to be only one conclusion. Since a violent revolution was necessary to unseat the national bourgeoisie to begin with, it must be assumed that coercion by the proletariat would be ne-

¹⁰Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Correspondence, Letter No. 177, p. 399

cessary to achieve the eradication of any remainder of the old order.

Engels' speculation on the exemplary strength of the new socialist structure and his exclusion of offensive acts against old regimes seem to be self-contradictory. A hypothetical situation will serve to demonstrate why. Assuming that the party was to continue its education work in the unreformed countries and that the economic bases would continue to inevitably advance, at some point in time one or another of these nations would experience a revolutionary upheaval similar to that which had taken place earlier in the established socialist states. However, the proletarians of that currently revolutionary nation would be subject to the influences of the other, remaining, bourgeois countries. Meanwhile Engels' exclusion of all but defensive war would tie the socialist hands. Even if a good communist could bring himself to allow this, it appears that the beneficence of the socialist example would be subject to rather rapid erosion. The alternative is to view the proletariat as a united body in both the "reorganized" and bourgeois nations. This would allow the socialist states to attack any bourgeois country in the name of "defense" of the proletariat. The prospects for the nationalist, whether within the new socialist organization or not, are quite dismal.

III.

The Revolutionary Peoples

As of 1848 when The Communist Manifesto was published, Marx and Engels had stated that the goal of the communist party was to provide for proletarian unity in the struggle with the bourgeoisie. There had been no mention of a related goal which involved the exacerbation of national antagonisms in order to weaken the established regimes and accelerate historical progress. However, Marx and Engels devoted much of their writings to the promotion of precisely this type of conflict during the subsequent two decades. Their efforts at encouraging hostilities which could benefit the revolution included support for independence movements and attempts to incite war. Both types of endeavor were conducted on a highly selective basis. It was this very selectivity which has led to much of the debate over Marxist policies concerning national self-determination and war. Those who believe that Marx and Engels favored national independence are able to bolster their argument with many quotations. Their opponents have an equal number of examples at their disposal.¹

¹In addition to these two frequent and familiar areas of contention, some authors argue that Marx and Engels formulated their policies on the basis of German nationalism. S.F. Bloom presents a convincing argument that such an interpretation is unfounded. (S.F. Bloom, World of Nations, Chp. 7.) Bloom contends that the Germanic peoples received as much criticism from Marx as most others.

A similar situation exists on the issue of whether Marx was a war monger or pacifist. The solution to this problem lies in the fact that both schools of thought are partially correct. The overall relation between independence movements or wars at a particular time and their predicted effect on the status of the proletarian revolution were the factors which Marx and Engels used in determining whether they favored such events or not. There was no firm policy one way or the other. Theirs was an entirely dialectical approach. A particular independence movement might be of benefit to the revolution today and detrimental tomorrow. The same could be said of a war. Although this ambivalence precludes any meaningful argument on whether Marx and Engels were pacifists or war mongers etc., the determinants of their position on such matters may be summarized as follows:

Independence Movements

A. Beneficial

1. Any movement which served to weaken a backward, reactionary, feudal-aristocratic regime without strengthening another similar government.
2. Any movement which might result in bourgeoisie ascendancy in a backward state since the growth of the proletariat was dependent upon bourgeoisie ascendancy.

B. Detrimental

1. Movements which strengthened the aristocracy of any feudal, backward nation.

2. Disruptive movements in established centralized, bourgeois states since such activities hindered proletarian growth.²

War

A. Beneficial

1. Wars involving industrially advanced states against backward states.
2. Wars among the backward feudal states.
3. Wars in which advanced nations might extend their influence over backward nations.

B. Detrimental

1. Wars between industrially advanced states which caused proletarian disunity and threatened destruction of modern industry.
2. Wars which might extend the influence of feudal states.

Some examples of how Marx and Engels made use of these determinants will serve to clarify and further explain them as well as verify their accuracy since they are empirically derived.

Engels published a series of nine articles on the debate over ratification of the partition of Poland by the German National Assembly in 1848. These articles appeared in the newspaper Neue Rheinische Zeitung. The third of the series, published on August 19, contains his analysis of the

²Irish Independence from England, which Marx eventually supported, was a partial exception to this rule. The subject is discussed below but the problem was essentially one of proletarian disunity in England and economic advance in Ireland.

situation.³ He stated that the Holy Alliance of Russia, Prussia and Austria was the power base of reaction in Europe and that the alliance was held together by the partition of Poland i.e., the common theft of Polish territory made the three nations interdependent. The support which the Austrian, Prussian and Polish aristocracy received from the Russians permitted them to retain their dominance and to keep their respective bourgeoisie classes subjugated. Engels' solution was a war with Russia in order to obtain Polish independence.

"The war with Russia would be a complete, public and real break with our whole shameful past, it would mean the liberation and unification of Germany, the re-establishment of democracy on the ruins of feudalism and the brief dream of ascendancy of the bourgeoisie."⁴

This support for the Poles provides an example of the first, beneficial type of independence movement as well as advocacy of a war against reaction. Engels believed that Polish independence would split the alliance of the three reactionary regimes and promote proletarian interests as is evident from his reference to the temporary ascendancy of the

³Frederick Engels, "The Debate on Poland in Frankfurt (1848)" in Paul W. Blackstock and Bert F. Hoselitz, Eds., The Russian Menace to Europe (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1952) pp. 91-95. Although Engels is the author, Marx undoubtedly agreed with the views since, in Engels' own words, Marx was the "dictator" of the editorial boards of NRZ.

⁴Ibid., p. 94

bourgeoisie. This Polish issue also exemplifies the temporary nature of Marxist support. Engels wrote to Marx and evaluated the Polish peoples' revolutionary contribution two years after the NRZ article was published.

"The more I think over the business the clearer it becomes to me that the Poles as a nation are done for and can only be made use of as an instrument until Russia herself is swept into the agrarian revolution. From that moment onwards Poland will have absolutely no more reason for existence."⁵

Both Marx and Engels continued to support the Polish independence movement for the remainder of their lives but, significantly, the propitious Russian agrarian revolution, the conditional basis for their support, did not occur until after both men had died.

NRZ also took a firm stand in favor of Kossuth's Hungarian Revolution which provides a second example of the Marxist instrumental use of nationalists and also clarifies the concept of peoples who were "done for" and had ceased to have a "reason for existence".⁶ Engels' analysis places the Austrian Slavs with the exception of the Poles, the Rumanians and the Transylvanian Saxons on the side of reaction while the Magyars,

⁵Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Correspondence, Letter No. 10, p. 37.

⁶Frederick Engels, "Hungary and Panslavism (1849)" in Blackstock and Hoselitz, Eds., pp. 56-67. The articles collected in this chapter were published in NRZ during January and February of 1849.

Germans and Poles were said to represent truly revolutionary forces. This division was made on the basis of previous historical record as chronicled in the article. Engels stated that the three chosen peoples had a history as carriers of progress, an active role in previous history, and vitality. The other nationalities are cited as lacking such a record of progress and were consequently counter-revolutionary and destined to perish. This was not an attribute peculiar to the Slavs but rather one which could be found in almost any established nation.

"There is no country in Europe which does not contain in some corner one or several ruins of people, left-overs of earlier inhabitants, pushed back by and made subject to the nation which later became the carrier of historical development. These remains of nations which have been mercilessly trampled down by the passage of history, as Hegel expressed it, this ethnic trash always becomes and remains until its complete extermination or denationalization, the most fanatic carrier of counter-revolution, since its entire existence is nothing more than a protest against a great historical revolution."⁷

In addition to their lack of history, the Slavs were also said to be guilty of counter-revolution because of the Pan-Slavist movement. Marx and Engels were and remained adamantly opposed to Pan-Slavism because they predicted that backward, reactionary, Tzarist Russia would control any type of Slavic confederation. A South Slavic independence movement might have

⁷Ibid., p. 63

been judged as favorable had it not been for the possibility of strengthening Russia. The contention that the East European Slavs (Poles excepted) had no future was further bolstered by the argument that the vital, progressive Germans and Magyars who were intermixed with these people would form the bourgeoisie of any nation-state established there. As a result, the nation would not be Slavic. Indeed, the article says that the past oppression of the South Slavs belonged among the best and worthiest deeds of which the German and Magyar peoples could boast.⁸

The Balkan peoples received a great deal of attention from Marx and Engels and demanded full use of their viable nationality and war policies. In April of 1853, they began a series of articles for the New York Tribune which contain the Marxist assessment of the situation in Turkey and the Balkans, conditions which were to lead to the Crimean War. In the article of April 7, Turkey was divided into three regions for

⁸Frederick Engels, "Democratic Panslavism (1849)" in Blackstock and Hoselitz, Eds., p. 76. B.D. Wolfe contends that Marx and Engels' condemnation of the Slavs is an adaptation of Hegel who stated that the Slavs were unworthy to figure in the grand historical scheme since they had played an insufficient role in the development of the "Human Spirit", (B.D. Wolfe, Marxism, (New York: The Dial Press, 1965). However, this argument is considerably weakened by Marx's support for Polish independence, the fact that the Serbs were also judged to be "revolutionary" on another occasion and Engels' own association of Pan-Slavism with reactionary Russia. The concept of contributors to the "proletarian revolution" rather than to Hegel's "Human Spirit" might be a preferable analogy.

the purpose of analysis.⁹ Egypt was removed from the study since the authors had decided it would belong to England in any future partition and Asiatic Turkey was not considered because Mussulman fanaticism and Turkish nationalism were too strong to invite any attempts at conquest. This left only the European portion of Turkey to be considered. The author then stated that the splendid territory to the south of the Save and Danube had the misfortune to be inhabited by a conglomerate of different races and nationalities, of which it was hard to say which was least fit for progress and civilization. The essay states that the Turks themselves had earned this right until 1853 by keeping the area under Turkish domination but, after that date, their weakening rule lost them the prerogative. The fanaticism of Islam had also periodically availed itself of help from reactionary Austria or Russia and, for these reasons, Turkey was placed in the counter-revolutionary category. After an assessment of the other nationalities in the area itself, all were judged to be reactionary with the possible exceptions of the Wallachians

⁹Marx or Engels, "The Background of the Dispute" in Blackstock and Hoselitz, Eds., pp. 121-128. The editors do not identify the author of articles under this chapter and since both Marx and Engels submitted essays to the Tribune under Marx's name, it is difficult to say which author was actually responsible. The authorship source determinations of the Marx-Lenin Institute are not available since these articles are conspicuously lacking in Soviet published collections of Marx and Engels works probably because the essays are extremely vituperative toward Russia.

and Moldavians under Turkish rule and the Serbs. It should be noted here that in 1853 the Serbs had graduated from their ethnic trash status of 1849. However, a nation could achieve the Marxist, revolutionary category and earn the right to temporary existence in far less time than the Serbs had needed. On April 12, 1853, after providing a lesson to the English on the value of the Dardanelles for both commercial and military reasons in hopes of promoting their intervention, the Tribune article rehabilitated the Turks who had been branded as reactionaries only five days earlier.

"But let Russia get possession of Turkey, and her strength is increased nearly half, and she becomes superior to all the rest of Europe put together. Such an event would be an unspeakable calamity to the revolutionary cause. The maintenance of Turkish independence, or, in case of a possible dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the arrest of the Russian scheme of annexation, is a matter of the highest moment. In this instance the interests of revolutionary Democracy and of England go hand in hand. Neither can permit the Czar to make Constantinople one of his capitals, and we shall find that when driven to the wall, the one will resist him as determinedly as the other."¹⁰

Virtually anything was preferable to Russian expansion.

The article of April 19, still trying to encourage intervention, assured the western bourgeoisie that the absence of Turkish, Austrian or Russian domination would not serious-

¹⁰Ibid., p. 133

ly effect the volume of trade with the Balkans.¹¹

On August 5, things looked so disappointing to Marx that the whole of Western Europe was branded reactionary and he was even willing to tolerate Slavic emancipation or a Greek empire.¹²

"Too impotent and too timid to undertake the reconstruction of the Ottoman Empire by the establishment of a Greek Empire, or of a Federal Republic of Slavonic States, all they [Western Governments] aim at is to maintain the status quo, i.e., the state of putrefaction which forbids the Sultan to emancipate himself from the Czar, and the Slavonians to emancipate themselves from the Sultan.

The revolutionary party can only congratulate itself on this state of things. The humiliation of the reactionary Western Governments, and their manifest impotency to guard the interests of European civilization against Russian encroachment, cannot fail to work out a wholesome indignation in the people who have suffered themselves, since 1849, to be subjected to the rule of counter-revolution."¹³

By February of 1854, English and French fleets were in the Black Sea and the prospects of a general war were sufficient to warrant some Marxist speculation about its possible effects on Europe. This analysis also appeared in the Tribune.¹⁴

¹¹Ibid., pp. 133-138

¹²The Greeks had also been branded as reactionary in earlier articles of the series.

¹³Karl Marx, "Traditional Russian Policy" in Blackstock and Hoselitz, Eds., p. 164

¹⁴Karl Marx, "Military Stalemate and the Home Front (1854-1855)" in Blackstock and Hoselitz, Eds., pp. 178-182.

If a European war were to come, Marx stated that it would probably be between Russia on the one hand and England, France and Turkey on the other. He went on to say that Austria would probably side with Russia and predicted that Prussia would seek the highest reward but finally end up in the Russian camp.

It would be difficult to imagine how badly Marx and Engels wanted this war if their revolutionary theory were not taken into account. The situation couldn't have been better. If England and France would declare war on Russia, Prussia and Austria, the bastions of reaction would be under attack, the modern civilized countries would be fighting together, Italy and Hungary might gain independence and German unification could conceivably be achieved. Proletarian dissatisfaction with the progress of such a war might result in the socialist revolution itself. Even if Turkey kept its dominant role in Eastern Europe, there would be no significant loss since the evaluation of the Balkan nationalities had not shown any great degree of superior historical vitality among the peoples there.

Unfortunately from the viewpoint of Marx and Engels, the ideal war steadfastly refused to escalate to the degree which was required. By August of 1854, Marx was goading everyone to fight.

"The fact is, that conservative Europe - the Europe of "order, property, family, religion" - the Europe of monarchs, feudal lords, moneyed men, however they may be differently assorted in different countries - is once more exhibiting its extreme impotency. Europe may be rotten, but a war should have roused the sound elements, a war should have brought forth some latent energies; and assuredly there should be that much pluck among two hundred and fifty millions of men, that at least one decent struggle might be got up wherein both parties could reap some honor, such as force and spirit can carry off even from the field of battle. But no, not only is the England of the middle classes, the France of the Bonapartes, incapable of a decent, hearty, hard-fought war; but even Russia, the country of Europe least infected by infidel and unnerving civilization, cannot bring about anything of the kind. The Turks are fit for sudden starts of offensive action, and stubborn resistance on the defensive, but seem not to be fit for large combined maneuvers with great armies. Thus everything is reduced to a degree of impuissance and a reciprocal confession of weakness, which appears to be as reciprocally expected by all parties. With Governments such as they are at present, this Eastern war may be carried on for thirty years, and yet come to no conclusion."¹⁵

This type of war mongering marks the remainder of the Tribune articles with invectives against governments, war ministers and generals. The great opportunity was slipping away.

In June of 1855, Sevastopol was finally taken and the peace of Paris was signed in March of 1856. Although Turkey maintained its independence and Russian influence in the

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 186-187

Crimea was dealt a severe blow, the war was an almost total failure when measured against Marxist revolutionary expectations. There had been no significant revolutionary setbacks but neither were the advances worth mentioning.

The flagrant and opportunistic instrumental use of national aspirations in order to achieve the Marxist goal of a socialist revolution is so evident when measured against any norms other than those of the revolutionary theory itself that further comment is not necessary. However, it is of interest to analyze what Marx and Engels were doing in terms of their own system of values.

According to their theory, the inevitability of both the revolution and of national conflicts until it occurred were certain. The Communist Manifesto may be interpreted as requiring only a waiting period with interim, proletarian coordination activities. However, Marx and Engels had chosen a policy of actively promoting the revolution. This decision presumes that the hardships which result from the intentional exacerbation of conflicts will not outweigh the advantages to be gained from the early achievement of socialism. There is no Marxist argument which justifies this assumption. If their efforts had succeeded, the result would have been a general war in either 1848 or 1853. Some assurance that the pain and loss of life involved would be equal or less than the total

evil of the economic exploitation which would otherwise have occurred during the remaining period before the "natural" progression to socialism is certainly necessary for rational men to make this decision. Still it is lacking. It might be argued that war was the inevitable result of the class struggle but there is no certainty that the particular wars which Marx chose to promote were either inevitable or necessary.

A similar question arises over support for independence movements. When selectively supporting them, what assurance is there that the correct choice of nationality has been made? Marx and Engels clearly based their selections on past historical achievements but, by their own admission, previous history had been a series of involuntary, accidental occurrences. Furthermore, if history is to be the criteria, then the choice of the Poles and Magyars as nations with a particular aptitude for generating bourgeoisie exploiters was a poor one. It was the Czech portion of Austria in which industry developed earliest and the Czechs had been relegated to the "ethnic trash" category. To have advocated Czech suppression and Hungarian or Polish dominance in 1848 subsequently appears to be the equivalent of demanding useless hardship, a strange activity for humanitarians. A dialectical approach reveals that Marx was exploiting the Poles and Magyars as surely as any bourgeoisie would have. According to his theory, a successful Polish

or Hungarian independence effort was impossible before these peoples reached their full historical development. According to Marx, it required successive, quantitative advances in the mode of production followed by a qualitative change to a more modern economic base in order for the political superstructure to shift. If the effort to achieve independence were prematurely successful, the new nation was doomed to immediate failure for want of new economic foundations. The only salvation would be immediate support from industrially advanced, socialist countries since bourgeois greed precluded any other. However, neither Marx nor Engels were ready to guarantee that independence for either nation would result in a socialist revolution. To encourage a nation to seek independence when success is impossible according to one's own theory is rather weird benevolence unless some greater good is an absolute certainty.

An early socialist revolution would also have meant that national differences would be greater than those which remain after a period of full economic development. If an early revolution occurred, then what was to prohibit further strife and oppression among even socialist nations? Expressed another way, why should an enemy be attacked today if history decrees he will be a friend tomorrow? No Marxist reply to such questions was provided.

IV.

The Nationalist Dilemma.

Regardless of how a humanitarian believed that the betterment of mankind was to be achieved, goading international conflicts was a poor choice of strategy in the environment of growing nineteenth century nationalism. The conflicting foreign policy objectives of the established nation-states were constrained only by a balance of power structure which was subject to frequent shifts because of rapid industrial and technological advances. The real and constant threat of war which resulted from this unstable situation caused an ever increasing demand for the individual nation to provide protection from foreign encroachment for its citizens. In order to provide this security, various national governments sought to attain an ever stronger power base through territorial expansion, a method which only served to reinforce the international conflict of interest. In this ominous atmosphere, conducive to both nationalism and war, it was not likely that Marx and Engels would achieve the unification of the proletariat. In Marxist terms, their analysis of the historical schedule was incorrect. The pitiful condition of the working classes, so carefully documented by Marx in Capital, had not yet resulted in the removal of proletarian, national loyal-

ties even among the industrially advanced countries. However, it took a catastrophic series of events to convince Marx of this fact and force him to reinterpret the status of the class conflict.

There had been several warnings that the application of the theory was not entirely compatible with historical reality. When the Second Republic was established in France, Marx had written that the revolution itself was a combined effort of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and that once the overthrow of the old government was achieved, the French bourgeoisie had suppressed their proletarian allies. He hailed that event as the first great battle fought between the two classes of modern society.

"Thus only the June defeat has created all the conditions under which France can seize the initiative of the European revolution. Only after baptism in the blood of the June insurgents did the tricolor become the flag of the European revolution - the red flag."¹

As the vanguard of Marx's revolution, the French fumbled badly and they did so only three years later when Louis Napoleon's coup d'etat ended the Second Republic in December of 1851. Engels at first declared this to be a silly, stupid co-

¹Karl Marx, The Class Struggle in France, in Lewis S. Feuer, Ed., Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1959)

medy which would not last.² Later, as the regime proved to be more than a transitory phenomenon, he made the remarkable assertion that Louis Napoleon's continued success was due to a completely bourgeois attitude on the part of the French workers, a result of the imperial prospects.³ If this evaluation were accepted, the revolution was at a much less advanced stage than that which was depicted in the optimistic Communist Manifesto. Marx did not agree. His own analysis is contained in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte which was written in 1852.⁴ He attributed the absence of a true revolutionary spirit in France to the arrest of the leaders of the proletariat and to proletarian fear of a recurrence of bourgeois oppression. He stated that the supremacy of Louis Napoleon was simply the dominance of the executive over the parliamentary branch of government. He even discovered an advantage in that the isolation of the executive left it vulnerable to a future, concentrated, proletarian attack. This explanation salvaged the theory of the inevitable progression of history and solved the problem of French, imperialistic, proletarian

²Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Correspondence 1846-1895, Letter No. 17, p. 51.

³Ibid., Letter No. 19, p. 60.

⁴Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, in Feuer, Ed., pp. 318-348.

aspirations.

Although Marx was able to put Engels' mind at ease over the difficulties in France, he became increasingly aware that there was a great lack of proletarian internationalism. In 1864, while writing the charter for the first "International", he was forced to address the subject of relations between the various nations. Rather than state his nationality policy for what it actually was, he resorted to general and ambiguous phrases. He admitted that this was intentional and justified himself to Engels in a letter on 4 November, 1864:

"In so far as international politics come into the address, I speak of countries, not of nationalities, and denounce Russia, not the lesser nations. My proposals were all accepted by the sub-committee. Only I was obliged to insert two phrases about "duty" and "right" into the Preamble to the Statutes, ditto "truth, morality, and justice," but these are placed in such a way that they can do no harm."⁵

The obvious assumption was that the workers would not have accepted the theory with all its implications for the nationalities.

The Irish presented Marx with another problem of proletarian nationalism. In November of 1867, he wrote to Engels that although he had previously thought that Irish independence was impossible, he now believed that it was inevitable.⁶

⁵Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Correspondence, Letter No. 71, p. 162.

⁶Ibid., Letter No. 101, p. 228.

The fact that nationalism was the cause for this shift and Marx's admission of it are evident. A letter to Kugelmann of 29 November, 1869, stated that the repression in Ireland had caused a great many Irish immigrants to seek work in England and, as a consequence, the struggles for Irish independence were then reflected in disunity among the English and Irish workers within England itself.⁷ This analysis of the problem was repeated in a letter to Meyer and Vogt on the 9th of April, 1870:

"But the English bourgeoisie has much more important interests in the present Irish regime. Owing to the constantly increasing concentration of farming, Ireland supplies its own surplus to the English labour market and thus forces down wages and lowers the moral and material position of the English working class. And most important of all: every industrial and commercial centre in England now possesses a working-class population divided into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who lowers his standard of life. In relation to the Irish worker he feels himself a member of the ruling nation and so turns himself into a tool of the aristocrats and capitalists against Ireland, thus strengthening their domination over himself."⁸

England, the most industrially advanced of the European countries, suffered from a divided working class. Proletarian dis-

⁷Ibid., Letter No. 134, pp. 278-279

⁸Ibid., Letter No. 141, p. 289

unity there precluded any possibility of a successful English revolution which, in turn, meant that the entire European revolutionary movement was weakened. In order to remove the cause of the conflict, Marx advocated Irish independence. The small, Irish nation had obtained a concession from Marx which was unique. Their country was neither large enough nor rich enough in natural resources to merit a separate national existence according to his views.⁹ They were economically backward, had already been "centralized" by the British bourgeoisie, and should have been well on the road to denationalization. Marx smoothed over the apparent anomaly with a prediction that once the Irish were free, they would enter into a federal agreement with England, thus preserving his ideas on economic unity.

⁹In order for a nation to enjoy a place in the Marxist plan until the revolution occurred, it had to be of a certain, optimum size. Generally, a country required a quantity of population, territory and resources which would permit it to achieve an advanced state of economic development (S.F. Bloom, World of Nations, Chp. 4). A country which was able to meet these criteria merited independence and the right to freely determine its own destiny. Lesser nations did not. Engels had stated this idea in his articles on Polish independence. To say that the Poles merited independence and self-determination did not mean that the lesser nationalities which had been included in the Polish state before the partition of 1772 also obtained this right. (Engels, "What Have the Working Classes to Do with Poland?" in Blackstock and Hoselitz, eds., Chp. 6). In 1882, Engels said that the Irish and Poles had not only the right but the duty to be nationalists and that, when they were, they became internationalists of the best kind (Engels, "Nationalism, Internationalism and the Polish Question" in Blackstock and Hoselitz, eds., Chp.9).

The issue of Irish and English proletarian disunity was soon replaced by historical events of much greater significance. By July of 1870, Bismarck had finally managed to goad Louis Napoleon into war and by August, Marx was elated at its progress. He was certain that this war would lead to a new government in France. To insure a united effort, Engels proposed the following policy for Marxist adherents:

"I think our people can:

1. Join the national movement - you can see from Kugelmann's letter how strong it is - in so far as and for so long as it is limited to the defense of Germany (which does not exclude an offensive, in certain circumstances, before peace is arrived at).
2. At the same time emphasise the difference between German-national and dynastic-Prussian interests.
3. Work against any annexation of Alsace and Lorraine - Bismarck is now revealing the intention of annexing them to Bavaria and Baden.
4. As soon as a non-chauvinistic republican government is at the helm in Paris, work for an honourable peace with it.
5. Constantly stress the unity of interest between the German and French workers, who did not approve of the war and are also not making war on each other.
6. Russia, as in the International Address."¹⁰

The policy was easier to establish than to execute. Nationalism

¹⁰Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Correspondence, Letter No. 145, pp. 296-297

was running rampant in France and Germany. Marx himself attested to the strenght of German feelings on August 17, 1870:

"The lust for Alsace and Lorraine seems to pre-dominate in two circles, the Prussian camarilla and the South German beer-patriots. It would be the greatest misfortune which could befall Europe and above all Germany."¹¹

By the 12th of September, Engels was fearful that the French workers might revolt before peace was concluded and wrote to Marx that this should be prevented if at all possible.

"I would be appalling if as their last act of war the German armies had to fight out a battle with the Parisian workers at the barricades. It would throw us back fifty years and delay everything so much that everybody and everything would get into a false position - and the national hatred and the domination by phrases which would then arise among the French workers."¹²

On January 28, 1871, the French provisional government, which had replaced the badly beaten Louis Napoleon, signed an armistice with the Prussians. The threat of a confrontation between French workers and the German army had been avoided but a new disaster soon befell the proletariat of France. The Prussian peace terms which were accepted on March 1st provided for the annexation of the whole of Alsace and a sizable portion of Lorraine. French nationalist resentment

¹¹Ibid., Letter No. 146, p. 299

¹²Ibid., Letter No. 149, p. 305 - see also Engels' article in Pall Mall of 17 September, 1870.

toward the unfavorable terms which the provisional government had signed together with the monarchist leanings of that government led to another revolt in Paris. The rebels siezed power and formed the "Commune" along socialist lines but it was a very temporary revolutionary success. On May 21st, French government forces attacked the workers. In seven bloody days of fighting, 20,000 were killed in the streets of Paris and the Commune was obliterated.

The Franco-Prussian War, the Annexation of Alsace, and the fall of the Commune caused both an awakening and a serious dilemma for Marx and Engels. It was a many faceted problem.

1. After the war, Central and Western Europe were divided into approximately the economic regions which Marx considered adequate for further, rapid, industrial progress. Germany was now firmly united and the undisputed leader of the German speaking people. Italy had united in 1866. Nevertheless, there were still territorial delineations which caused severe proletarian disunity, especially the German-French enmity over Alsace and the English-Irish problems. There were also irredentist murmurs on the Italian Peninsula. How these territorial revisions could be achieved without a general war was not at all clear. With German unification and Louis Napoleon's fall, the number of beneficial war possibilities was markedly reduced.
2. Warfare among the Western European countries was no longer an acceptable method of promoting the revolution. The German slaughter of the French forces had aptly shown the potential destructiveness of modern warfare. Furthermore, the war had been one of national mobilization on the part of Germany and conscription had placed the workers themselves in the fighting.

3. The premature establishment of the Paris Commune, generated by nationalistic resentment and the wholehearted support of the war effort by the German workers had irrefutably disclosed the low level of proletarian awareness which existed.
4. It was evident that modern industrial growth, the sine qua non of a proletarian revolution and socialism, was accompanied by increasingly destructive military capability which, in turn, posed a serious threat to the very industry which created it.
5. Worst of all, the Marxist theory itself predicted that the possibility for a war among the industrially advanced nations was likely. A modern mode of production increased bourgeois competition in the world market as the number of products increased. The badly divided proletariat had little chance of a successful coup before a new war broke out unless there was a marked and rapid increase of awareness.

After 1871, there was an evident reduction in the attempts on the part of Marx and Engels to either encourage independence movements or war monger. Both men became more concerned with the internal politics of the nations and with the promotion of proletarian interests through parliamentary methods or trade union activities. The class conflict in Russia, virtually ignored before 1871, received some attention. National factionalism in the "International" led Marx to abandon it in 1872. He explained this in a letter to Bolte in November of that year and concluded:

"Where the working class is not yet far enough advanced in its organisation to undertake a decisive campaign against the collective power, i.e., the political power of the ruling classes,

it must at any rate be trained for this by continual agitation against and a hostile attitude towards the policy of the ruling classes. Otherwise it will remain a plaything in their hands, as the September revolution in France showed, and as is also proved up to a certain point by the game Messrs. Gladstone & Co. are bringing off in England even up to the present time."¹³

Sorge resigned from the "International" in 1874 and Engels agreed with his action. He predicted that Marx's writings would have an influence in the years to come and then a new Communist International could be founded.¹⁴ The difference between these and the statements of 1848, the Crimean War period, or even as late as the Austro-Prussian war of 1866 is unmistakable. The situation was not serious enough to cause either Marx or Engels to question the entire theory of economic determination but nationalism was striking some telling blows.

The Russo-Turkish war of 1877 seemed to provide the answer to Marx's theoretical dilemma. Such a war was completely acceptable. Russia and Turkey were both reactionary and a war between the two might result in a Russian revolution. Marx believed that such a revolution was imminent since all sections of Russian society were in complete disintegration economically, morally and intellectually.¹⁵ There seemed to

¹³Ibid., Letter No. 157, p. 319

¹⁴Ibid., Letter No. 160, pp. 329-330

¹⁵Ibid., Letter No. 165, pp. 348-349

be no threat of war between the West European countries and Marx predicted that the Prussian aristocracy might even fall if they intervened. A bourgeois revolution in Russia or the fall of Prussia could trigger the proletarian revolution in Europe and the problem of national antagonisms would be resolved.

"For the moment everything depends on the Poles (in the Kingdom of Poland) lying low. If only there are no risings there at the moment. Bismarck would at once intervene and Russian chauvinism would once more side with the Tsar. If on the other hand the Poles wait quietly till there is a conflagration in Petersburg and Moscow, and Bismarck then intervenes as a saviour, Prussia will find its - Mexico."¹⁶

In Germany, Liebknecht prepared a pamphlet calling for intervention on the side of Turkey in order to protect the Western Powers from Russia. Marx sent him two letters supporting the article but, by the time it appeared, the war was over and the revolutionary hopes were dashed.

When the subject of a new "International" arose in 1891, Marx opposed its formation, stating that it would fail to take national differences into consideration.

"It is my conviction that the critical juncture for a new International Workingmen's Association has not yet arrived and for this reason I regard all workers' congresses, particularly socialist congresses, in so far as they are not related

¹⁶Ibid., Letter No. 165, p. 349. A Polish independence movement was not deemed opportune for the revolution.

to the immediate given conditions in this or that particular nation, as not merely useless but harmful. They will always fade away in innumerable stale generalised banalities."¹⁷

Marx died in 1883 still opposed to an "International" and without providing a solution to the problem of nationalism in Western Europe. Engels' writings from 1883 until his own death in 1895 expressed antipathy for war among the advanced countries and tended, more and more, to support the promotion of proletarian ascendancy either through use of the means provided by representative government or subversion. In 1888, he wrote to Sorge that a war would set the workers movement back for years and chauvinism would swamp everything.

When the rapprochement between France and Russia threatened war in Europe, Engels wrote to Bebel that the party would almost certainly come to power in Germany in another ten years and then allow Alsace and Northern Schleswig to determine their own fate.

"For all that, I hope peace remains unbroken. In our present position we do not need to risk everything - but war would force us to do so. And then in another ten years we shall be quite differently preparedTherefore, I hope and desire that our splendid and secure development, which is advancing with the calm and inevitability of a process of nature, may remain on its natural lines."¹⁸

¹⁷Ibid., Letter No. 173, p. 387

¹⁸Ibid., Letter No. 219, p. 492

Engels' clearest expression of his anti-war policy is contained in a preface to a new edition of the Class Struggles in France which appeared in 1895. The article also practically precluded the future revolt at the barricades as involving too great a risk. The threat of war was eliminated by simply stating that war was no longer possible.

"The recruitment of the whole of the population able to bear arms into armies that could be counted in millions, and the introduction of firearms, projectiles and explosives of hitherto undreamt of efficacy created a complete revolution in all warfare. This, on the one hand, put a sudden end to the bonapartist war period and insured peaceful industrial development, since any war other than a world war of unheard of cruelty and absolute incalculable outcome had become an impossibility. On the other hand, it caused military expenditure to rise in geometrical progression, and thereby forced up taxes to exorbitant levels and so drove the poorer classes of people into the arms of socialism. The annexation of Alsace-Lorraine, the most immediate cause of the mad competition in armaments, might set the French and German Bourgeoisie chauvinistically at each other's throats; for the workers of the two countries it became a new bond of unity. And the anniversary of the Paris Commune became the first universal commemoration day of the whole proletariat."¹⁹

This weak assurance of man's rationality and the statement that the taxation necessary for an arms race would drive people to socialism is as close as Marx or Engels ever came to pro-

¹⁹Karl Marx, The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850 (New York: International Publishers) p. 19. The Marxist shift from war monger to pacifist is aptly treated by B.D. Wolfe (Wolfe, Marxism, Chp. 3).

viding a solution to nationalism in the advanced countries. Both men died still convinced that nationalism was a bourgeois trait and that the proletariat only needed to be convinced of the fact. They had been able to use nationalism as an instrument of apparent benefit to the revolutionary cause in their early writings and had set an example for their followers by doing so. How nationalism was to be combated when it became a counter-revolutionary force, as had been the case in 1871, was an unsolved riddle.

V.

The Imperialist War

Vladimir I. Ulyanov was initially far more concerned with internal class conflicts in Russia than with the external manifestations of those struggles.¹ Marx and Engels had sought a war against Russia to generate a bourgeois revolution there and thus sap the strength of European reaction. Lenin was absorbed in party organization, agitation, propaganda and activism in order to promote the revolution from within. Thus it was 1905 before he made his first pronouncements on the subject of international warfare.

When the Russo-Japanese War broke out, it proved to be an elementary exercise for as knowledgeable a Marxist as Lenin. Since Japan was fighting against Russia, Japan was progressive. Lenin proclaimed this idea when Port Arthur fell to Japan on January 2, 1905. Advancing, progressive Asia had dealt backward and reactionary Europe an irreparable blow.²

¹Although not chronologically separable, for purposes of analysis it is convenient to place Lenin's doctrines on the subject of nationalism into three categories: (a) The problem of wartime nationalism; (b) The optimum choice of federation, autonomy or unity for the party organization and (c) The type of organization suitable for a multi-national, socialist state system. Such a division is employed in this essay. Section V deals with national wars and VI with the topics of party and state organization.

²V.I. Lenin, Collected Works (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1963) Vol. 3, p. 48

In spite of this baleful beginning, Lenin was not and never would be the war monger that Marx or Engels had been in their early years. He was quick to prevent any misunderstanding on the part of the proletariat. The same article declared:

"The revolutionary proletariat must carry on a ceaseless agitation against war, always keeping in mind, however, that wars are inevitable as long as class rule exists."³

This statement must have seemed a bit too pacifistic since it restricted the Marxist view that some international warfare could be beneficial to the proletariat. This was rectified in another essay on the war which was published in July.

"There are wars and wars. There are adventurist wars, fought to further dynastic interests, to satisfy the appetite of a band of freelooters, or to attain the objects of the knights of capitalist profit. And there is another kind of war - the only war that is legitimate in capitalist society - war against the people's oppressors and enslavers."⁴

Lenin's next opportunity to promote proletarian interests through support of war was provided by the Balkan states. His commentaries are significant in that they demonstrate how his views differed from those of Marx and Engels, his relative naivete concerning national aspirations and his ideas on independence movements. Marx and Engels had usually welcomed war

³Ibid., p. 53

⁴Ibid., p. 565 - July 10, 1905

in the Balkans but Lenin was not so ready to commit himself to support of a Balkan war nor was he willing to speculate on the probable alignment of nations as his predecessors had done. His first remarks on the Balkan situation appeared in Pravda on October 4, 1912 and were critical of an article in Novoye Vremya, which had referred to Balkan unrest as a rallying together of the lesser nations for a holy war of independence. Lenin accused the paper of supporting bourgeois, Russian, nationalist plunderers who did not recognize the possibilities of a war involving all of Europe.

"The nationalists' calculation is frank and shameless to the last degree. While mouthing pompous words about "a holy war of independence" of the peoples, they gamble with the lives of millions in the most cold-blooded way by inciting the peoples to a carnage for the profit of a handful of merchants and industrialists."⁵

Lenin did not want a war. The issues were too confused and the risk seemed prohibitive.

When the first Balkan war began on October 8, 1912, Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro were allied against Turkey. Lenin's attitude changed immediately. This was clearly a war of oppressed peoples against reactionary Turkey and he favored it so long as there was no intervention by the Western European nations.

⁵Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 18, p. 339

"Even the most "liberal" bourgeois Europe, we say in reply, can bring the Balkans nothing but support for decay and stagnation, nothing but bureaucratic obstacles to freedom. It is "Europe" that is hindering the establishment of a federal republic in the Balkans."⁶

The war appeared to be going so well that Lenin referred to it as a "New Chapter in World History" on October 21st. He stated that a step had been taken towards doing away with the survivals of medievalism throughout Eastern Europe.⁷ The Balkan monarchies had also solved the national problem to Lenin's satisfaction.

"The class-conscious workers of the Balkan countries are the first to put forward the slogan of a consistently democratic solution of the national problem in the Balkans. That slogan calls for a Balkan federal republic. The weakness of the democratic classes in the present-day Balkan states (where the proletariat is small in number and the peasants are downtrodden, disunited and illiterate) has resulted in an economically and politically indispensable alliance becoming an alliance of Balkan monarchies."⁸

On March 29, 1913, Lenin stated that the Balkan war was coming to an end. He believed that the capture of Adrianople was a conclusive victory for the Bulgarians and that the problem's centre of gravity had shifted from the theater of operations to that of squabbles and intrigues among the Great Powers.⁹

⁶Ibid., p. 349

⁷Ibid., p. 367

⁸Ibid., p. 368

⁹Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 19, p. 19

These were Lenin's last words on the Balkan situation and he would certainly have revoked them had it been possible. Hostilities had barely ceased when formerly progressive Greece, Serbia, Montenegro and Rumania, the national problem solvers, joined reactionary Turkey and attacked Bulgaria. The fighting began in June and ended in August of 1913. Lenin remained silent. Indeed, his former statements had been so wide of the mark that there was little to say. He chose to ignore the issue and was able to do this so effectively that he almost missed the beginnings of the first world war.

World War I was as hard a lesson for the leader of the Bolsheviks as the Franco-Prussian one had been for Marx. The "Second International" shattered as once again Social-Democrats rallied to the national standards. Lenin was confronted with the problem which Marx and Engels had left unsolved. His first reaction was a polemic against the socialist traitors to the revolution who were hastily voting war credits. They were bourgeois, chauvinist liars. The war itself was clearly defined as a bourgeois, imperialist and dynastic war.¹⁰ It was the duty of the Bolsheviks to agitate against the Tsar and chauvinism and the need was for weapons against one's own government, not against fellow workers of other nations.

¹⁰Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 21, p. 15

Lenin's concept of converting the international war into a series of civil conflicts, although far easier said than done, was at least a partial theoretical solution. However, two difficulties remained. First of all, the most definitive Marxist statement on the then current situation had been Engels' contention that defense of the fatherland was permissible under such circumstances. "Defense of the fatherland" was a hopeless solution. Both French and German Socialists were using that motto to justify their lack of international fervor while a state of war quite clearly existed between the two. Nevertheless, this was the Marxist heritage and if Lenin departed from it, he would need some very sound reasons. The second obstacle, closely related to the first, was the matter of national oppression. If one of two opposing countries continued to be aggressive while another's war effort broke down into civil war, the nation engaged in civil conflict would surely be invaded and oppressed by the aggressor. Lenin's solution so far lacked sufficient motive force to bring the proletarians and socialists to allow themselves to be oppressed by foreigners.

By November of 1914, Lenin had a rough solution. This was an Imperialist war which resulted from an advanced stage of capitalism and workers who supported it were being deluded.

"The question of the fatherland - we shall reply to the opportunists - cannot be posed without due consideration of the concrete historical nature of the present war. This is a imperialist war, i.e., it is being waged at a time of the highest development of capitalism, a time of its approaching end To the present-day bourgeoisie's attempts to divide and disunite them by means of hypocritical appeals for the "defense of the fatherland" the class-conscious workers will reply with ever new and persevering efforts to unite the workers of various nations in the struggle to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie of all nations. The bourgeoisie is duping the masses by disguising imperialist rapine with the old ideology of a "national war". This deceit is being shown up by the proletariat, which has brought forward its slogan of turning the imperialist war into a civil war."¹¹

Lenin had his theoretical solution. In the problem solving process, he had linked together the earlier theories of possible proletarian nationalism resulting from either national oppression or fraud on the part of the bourgeoisie and the idea of supra-national capital. The first of these theories had been developed during the intra-party debates over the nationality question itself and was, at the time, quite recently derived.¹² The idea of supra-national capital and bourgeoisie had been employed as early as 1895 in dealing with the

¹¹Ibid., pp. 38-39

¹²Stalin's essay Marxism and the National Question, first published in 1913, offered the idea that, especially under conditions of oppression, the proletariat and peasantry might become nationalistic and that the strength of any such movement depended upon the degree to which they participated in it. (J.V. Stalin, Works (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1953), Vol. 2, pp. 319-320).

"Economists" who had emphasized the inevitability of the revolution and "trade unionism".

"Commercial ties between the different countries are becoming closer and more extensive; capital constantly passes from one country to another. The banks, those huge depositories that gather capital together and distribute it on loan to capitalists, begin as national institutions and then become international, gather capital from all countries, and distribute it among the capitalists of Europe and America International associations of capitalists make their appearance. Capitalist domination is international."¹³

In 1895, this theory had served to explain the tardy arrival of Marx's revolution and had justified the need for violent revolt. Now Lenin was also applying it to the problem of the national war raging in Europe. In theory, there should have been no further problem with nationalistic conflicts. The bourgeoisie struggle was on a supra-national level and they employed their nation-state system only as an instrument to further their hopes of world domination. For a proletarian or peasant to allow himself to be duped into assisting them in this struggle under national pretenses was clearly inane.

Both Marx and Engels received some very cavalier treatment at this point. Lenin simply threw their theory away as being antique.

"In short, it is not surprising that Marx and the Marxists confined themselves to determining which

¹³Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 2, p. 109

bourgeoisie's victory would be more harmless to (or more favourable to) the world proletariat, at a time when one could not speak of a general proletarian movement against the governments and the bourgeoisie of all the belligerent countries."¹⁴

Lenin had become so engrossed in eradicating nationalism that he made the same omission that had occurred in 1905. Progressive wars of national liberation had been forgotten again. This time he used the Serbs as an example in correcting the error and managed to force at least some of his earlier Balkan pronouncements into the new theoretical mold. He had said they were progressive nationalists in 1912 and maintained that they still were.

"In the present war the national element is represented only by Serbia's war against Austria (which, by the way, was noted in the resolution of our Party's Berne Conference). It is only in Serbia and among the Serbs that we can find a national-liberation movement of long standing, embracing millions, "the masses of the peoples", a movement of which the present war of Serbia against Austria is a "continuation". If this war were an isolated one, i.e., if it were not connected with the general European war, with the selfish and predatory aims of Britain, Russia, etc., it would have been the duty of all socialists to desire the success of the Serbian bourgeoisie - this is the only correct and absolutely inevitable conclusion to be drawn from the national element in the present war."¹⁵

Lenin went on to say that this element exemplified one per-

¹⁴Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 21, p. 186

¹⁵Ibid., p. 235 .

cent of the war effort. The remaining ninety-nine percent was imperialist.

By the fall of 1915, Lenin had rounded out the theory and issued it under the title "Socialism and War". When the debate over the matter of the interpretation of imperialism continued, he summarized his arguments in a work under that title in 1916.¹⁶

When the novel theory of capitalist imperialism first appeared, it created a great fury of condemnation by other Marxists.¹⁷ The most frequent and obvious objection was that imperialism had clearly existed before and during Marx's lifetime but Marx himself had never associated it with the economics of modern industrial societies. He had condemned Germany's annexation of Alsace as nationalistic imperialism of the beer-hall variety and had frequently warned of the expansionist aims of backward, feudal Russia.¹⁸ Lenin's new theory amounted to an argument that Marx had been in error. His contention that there had been no proletariat during the nineteenth century implied the refutation of much of the Marxist doctrine which had clearly referred to an existent working class.

¹⁶Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 22, pp. 186-304

¹⁷B.D. Wolfe has described the war of words and Lenin's efforts to justify his theory to fellow Marxists (B.D. Wolfe, Marxism, Chp. 4).

¹⁸Karl Marx, "The Background of the Dispute (1853-1854)" in Blackstock and Hoselitz, Eds., pp. 140-141.

There were other purely theoretical objections. Marxist doctrine had amply provided for the possibility of general war in Europe. The greater competition in the world market which resulted from increased productivity was sufficient cause. There was no apparent need for Lenin's new theory other than to prevent proletarian participation in the war and the Western European Social-Democrats thought that participation was necessary. Each national party could rationalize that they were the vanguard of Marx's revolution, staunchly defending against reaction. A non-Marxist argument from a Russian whose theory also inferred absolution of his own country from any blame for the war was unacceptable.

Lenin's new doctrine also had some deleterious strategic implications. Extra-national, bourgeois agreements at least partially excluded the divisive character of the capitalist camp, an advantage which "pure" Marxism retained.¹⁹ There had been little objection to the concept of international capital in 1895. Lenin was practically unknown among Social-Democrats then and the argument that violent revolution was necessary in Tzarist Russia did not seem either irrational or dangerous. Applied to conditions in 1914, the

¹⁹This was Kautsky's objection. Lenin's reply was that bourgeois contradictions remained and these antagonisms resulted in the periodic "redivision" of the world (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 22, pp. 289-298).

doctrine extended the requirement for violent revolution outside Russia itself. Western Social-Democrats might agree that this was necessary for backward Russia which still required a bourgeois revolution but not for modern nations such as their own. Too much progress had been made through representative government to risk it all and certainly not for a non-Marxist idea.

The fact that Lenin's theory failed to convince other Marxists was a serious challenge to its validity. However, when considered in terms of other value systems, further objections also arise. One of Lenin's central premises was that Germany's extreme imperialism was due to a relative lack of colonies to receive excess capital.²⁰ This caused a need for expansion. He also cited the United States as having a corresponding need and stated that industrial growth was even more rapid there. If this had been the case, there should have been a much more immediate need for U.S. expansion since Lenin's own table of colonial possessions indicates that the U.S. had fewer colonies than Germany.²¹

	Colonies			
	1876		1914	
	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.
Great Britain	22.5	251.9	33.5	393.5
Russia	17.0	15.9	17.4	33.2
France	0.9	6.0	10.6	55.5
Germany	--	--	2.9	12.3
United States	--	--	0.3	9.7
Japan	--	--	0.3	19.2

²⁰Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 22, p. 273

²¹Ibid., p. 258

By application of Lenin's theory, the United States should have been at war before Germany. If colonial possessions of 2.9 million square kilometers couldn't absorb Germany's capital, 0.3 million was not likely to suffice for the U.S.

Lenin's selection of corporations which had reached agreement on the division of the world was also most unfortunate. In order to prove the international character of capital, he cited the following alliances or conflicts which had occurred during that division.²²

Alliances

1. An agreement between Union Electric (A.E.G.) of Germany and General Electric of the United States.
2. German and Anglo-American mercantile shipping agreement.
3. Distribution of oil in America and Germany by the American oil trust.

Conflict

1. Rockefeller versus the Anglo-Dutch oil trust.

If these agreements or enmities existed, then the U.S. and Germany should have been close collaborators. The possibility of war between the two, even if there was a "redivision" is excluded by Lenin's theory. There was absolutely no reason for the "colony poor" U.S. to attack "colony poor" Germany. Both should have been after the possessions of France, Eng-

²²Ibid., pp. 249-251

land and Russia.²³ Even if allowance is made for the fact that the U.S. was not in the war, the argument lacks validity. The U.S. could remain out of the war and be assured that new colonial possessions would become available as war weakened European colonial control and Europe itself became "capital poor".

For Lenin's theory, the worst possible choice of action for the U.S. was to declare war on Germany. In April of 1917, that declaration was made. Woodrow Wilson, with the committee for the promotion of U.S. bourgeois interests firmly supporting him, refuted V.I. Lenin.

Imperialism was too good a propaganda vehicle to be abandoned just because it was untrue. The contention that nations who were poor in capital could not be guilty of aggression had an even better application once Lenin's Bolsheviks seized power. A socialist state, which had abolished capital, could not be imperialistic by definition. Furthermore, non-national capitalistic avarice provided reasons for virtually any course of action chosen by the communists. The socialist state itself did not have to be threatened by another nation. Subversive capitalists would provide a perpetual threat so

²³What Russia, an importer of capital, was doing with colonial possessions is not explained.

severe that protective measures would always be necessary whether war or peace existed. The communists could pose as the defenders of their own peoples as well as every other non-industrial nation in the world. Any activity on the part of economically advanced, capitalistic nations had to be based on exploitation and greed. Only communists could "liberate" nations or nationalities.

VI.

Party and State Organization

Lenin's earliest difficulties with nationalism concerned questions of party and state organization which arose prior to the second congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party in 1903. Two Austrian socialists, Karl Renner and Otto Bauer, had devised a novel solution to the problem of national minority differences and rights for their multi-national state.¹ Since Austria was a country with the various ethnic groups intermixed throughout its territories, they believed that two methods of administration were necessary. One organization, formed along territorial lines, was to be responsible for local administration. This group was also to provide for inter-territorial coordination at the federal government level and would constitute the usual state system. At the same time, a second body, consisting of representatives from ethnic groups who were not to be limited by territorial boundaries, was to be formed. They were to represent all of their nationality in matters of language, culture and education regardless of location and under the protection of state law. Those who lacked a distinct territory were also to be

¹Otto Bauer, Die Nationalitätenfrage und Die Sozialdemokratie (Wien: Verlag der Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, 1924)

represented. This formula of extra-territorial, national-cultural autonomy was immediately accepted by the Bund, an international organization of Jewish Social-Democrats, since their people had no state or province which they could call their own.

As articles on national-cultural autonomy began to appear, Lenin was forced to turn his attention to the national question. Bauer's formula was unacceptable to him for several reasons.

1. It appeared to be a threat to the highly unified, democratic-centrist party which he believed was necessary for successful coordination of revolutionary work.
2. There was no need for autonomy or federation in a truly socialist state. National differences were to cause no problems since they would cease to exist.
3. The formula was not Marxist in that it removed a part of the social superstructure from the economic (territorial) base.

Lenin had expressed his ideas on using national aspirations to further the revolutionary cause in 1895 and had also decided on the relationship of the party with bourgeois nationalists and various other groups.² In Russia, the party of the proletariat could form a temporary alliance with nationalists, educated classes, the petty bourgeoisie and religious

²Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 2, p. 333

groups who were subject to persecution at the hands of the Tzarist government. This alliance would have to be of a temporary nature however. Only the proletariat would be capable of single-minded perseverance in generating a fully democratic revolution. The others, who were plagued with deep-rooted class antagonisms, could not be fully trusted because they might be willing to make concessions or compromises before the dictatorship of the proletariat was achieved.³ This demonstration of Lenin's understanding of the Marxist instrumental use of nationalists was not a particularly auspicious beginning but at least it did show some greater degree of leniency than the blanket condemnations which were characteristic of Marx and Engels.

In February of 1903, as the influences of the Bauer formula began to take effect, Lenin made his first pronouncements on state organization in an article on the Manifesto of the Armenian Social-Democrats.⁴ He praised the Armenians for including two correct principles on the nationality question in their declaration. These were:

1. The demand for political and civil liberties with complete equality rather than autonomy, and

³Ibid., pp. 325-336

⁴Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 6, pp. 328-330.

2. The right of self-determination for every nationality which formed a part of the state.

Lenin then went on to point out that there was an inconsistency in the Armenians' program. He stated that the demand for a federated republic was not compatible with equality and self-determination, and declared that the party had no business preaching federalism. Federation was said to presuppose autonomous class states which would lead to divisive influences among the proletarians. After calling for unity, Lenin went on to explain his concept of self-determination.

"The demand for recognition of every nationality's right to self-determination simply implies that we, the party of the proletariat, must always and unconditionally oppose any attempt to influence national self-determination from without by violence or injustice. While at all times performing this negative duty of ours (to fight and protest against violence), we on our part concern ourselves with the self-determination of the proletariat in each nationality rather than with self-determination of peoples or nations."⁵

He added that support for autonomy might be necessary in exceptional or isolated cases but that it should never be considered a permanent or binding part of the party's program. This early article is of great importance in understanding Lenin's position on the question of nationalism. The statements that violence was excluded in influencing a nation's

⁵Ibid., p. 329

decisions and that autonomy or federation were unacceptable as anything other than an interim measure to be infrequently applied were policies which he adhered to until after the revolution.⁶

At the second party congress in 1903, the Bund attempted to have the Bauer formula accepted and demanded that they be recognized as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat in Russia. They also advocated organization of the Social-Democratic party on an autonomous basis and the use of extra-territorial, national-cultural autonomy for future socialist states. Lenin polemically opposed these efforts and was able to muster enough support to defeat the resolution. The Bundist representatives walked out and their departure gave him the majority in the Congress which permitted him to push through his centrist party plan and most of his nationality policy. The national question was treated in articles 3, 7, 8 and 9 of the party program which emerged.

"Article 3.: Regional self-government for those border areas in which the way of life and composition of the population differ from those in genuinely Russian areas.

Article 7.: Destruction of social orders (Soslovii)

⁶Lenin's concept of an opportune application of federalism is contained in his analysis of the Balkan situation in 1912. Federation was the "correct" solution for the Balkan Monarchies who lacked a proletariat (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 18, p. 368).

and full equality for all citizens, regardless of sex, religion, race and nationality.

Article 8.: The right of a people to receive education in its native tongue, which right is to be guaranteed by the establishment of schools necessary for that purpose at the expense of the government and the organs of self-government; the right of every citizen to use his native tongue in public meetings; the use of native language on a basis of equality with the state language in all local, public and government agencies.

Article 9.: The right of all nations (Natsii) in the state to self-determination."⁷

Lenin objected to the word regional in article three as unduly restrictive but lost on this particular issue.⁸

The national question submerged from the scene for a time but by 1912, the Bund, Polish Social-Democrats, Mensheviks and the Balkan independence movements forced it to the surface again. Lenin came out strongly for both party and state unity, declaring that the two questions were linked together.

"Federation for the "nationalities", with separate centres and without a separate centre for the Russians, or complete unity?..... The Party has moved away from it for good. Where has it moved to? Towards an "Austrian" federation? Or towards a complete renunciation of federation, to actual

⁷Samad Shaheen, The Communist (Bolshevik) Theory of National Self-Determination (The Hague, Bandung: W. Van Hoeve Ltd., 1956) pp. 25-27

⁸Ibid., p. 28

unity? We are for the latter. We are opposed to "adapting socialism to nationalism".⁹

Lenin had included the demand for party unity as early as the 1903 congress and he never wavered on this point, accepting splits in the Social-Democrats rather than compromise. The requirement for a similar organization in a socialist state, hinted at in the "Armenian" article, was now clearly announced. Lenin also adhered to this "all or nothing" principle until later events forced him to concede.

The national question remained a hotly contested issue among Marxists and the necessity for a more complete explanation, along with a refutation of Bauer, became imperative. Lenin, involved in squabbles which had mostly arisen out of his absolute decree on party unity, lacked the time to write the required article. As a result, he chose one of his lieutenants, J.V. Stalin, for the task. Stalin was a Georgian from one of the "non-sovereign" border regions and his selection would eliminate any taint of Great-Russian chauvinism from the pamphlet. Lenin sent him to Austria, accompanied by Bukharin, to formulate the complete "Marxist" doctrine on the subject of nationalities.

Stalin produced Marxism and the National Question. Trotsky, in referring to Stalin's efforts, called it, "his

⁹Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 18, p. 412

only important or rather his only theoretical work" and attributed the thoughts and many of the actual phrases to Lenin instead of Stalin.¹⁰ When one considers the quality of other Stalinist works which never again approached the subtleties of this article, it appears that Trotsky was correct. Lenin's earlier writings had, in fact, included most of the principles which Stalin set forth.¹¹ In questioning whether Stalin alone was capable of writing the essay, Trotsky also pointed out that the brilliant Marxist theoretician, Bukharin, was the only member of the two-man Austrian task force who knew German, the language in which Bauer had written.¹²

"Stalin's" article begins by establishing the bond between nationalities and the concept of an economic base and

¹⁰Leon Trotsky, Stalin, An Appraisal of the Man and his influence (New York and London: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941) pp. 158-159.

¹¹For comparison, Lenin's early works on the national question are contained in the following articles of his Collected Works:
On Manifesto of Armenian Social-Democrats, Vol. 6, pp. 327-329
The National Question in our Programme, Vol. 6, pp. 455-463
The Latest Word in Bundist Nationalism, Vol. 6, pp. 519-521
 Even earlier, he had advocated conditional support for nationalists in The Task of the Russian Social-Democrats, Vol. 2, pp. 333-336. An additional important work is Lenin's A New Chapter in World History, Vol. 18, pp. 368-369, in which he advocates federation for the Balkans. This also appeared before Stalin left for Austria.

¹²Trotsky, op.cit., pp. 413-415

cultural superstructure. This was done by enumerating the characteristics which a nationality should have in order to be recognized as a nation.¹³ There were four such requirements:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------|
| 1. Commonly possessed territory | } | base |
| 2. Common economic bond | | |
| 3. Common language | } | superstructure |
| 4. Common culture | | |

A nationality which was lacking in any of these respects did not qualify as a "Marxist" nation. The nations and the phenomenon of nationalism were then firmly tied to history. Nationalism was a historical category of a certain epoch; specifically, the period of the progression from feudalism to capitalism. Stalin also resolved the problems of determining the strength of a nationalist movement and of nationalism within the ranks of the proletariat. He stated that nationalism's strength depended upon the degree to which the proletariat and peasantry participated in the movement. This, in turn was directly related to the type and amount of oppression to which a nation was subjected and determined the extent to which these two groups became nationalistic. Since nationalism arose out of subjugation, the party and proletariat as a whole

¹³J.V. Stalin, Works (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1953) Vol. 2, pp. 303-312.

were opposed to oppression. It had harmful effects on the full development of the workers of an oppressed nation. Stalin clarified this point. Oppression was harmful in two respects. First of all, it limited the general and political education of the proletariat.

"Restriction of freedom of movement, disfranchisement, repression of language, closing of schools, and other forms of persecution affect the workers no less, if not more, than the bourgeoisie. Such a state of affairs can only serve to retard the free development of the intellectual forces of the proletariat of subject nations."¹⁴

Secondly, preoccupation with national independence movements tended to unite the workers with the bourgeoisie rather than with the proletariat of other nations.

"It diverts the attention of large strata from social questions, questions of the class struggle, to national questions, questions "common" to the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. And this creates a favourable soil for lying propaganda about "harmony of interests", for glossing over the class interests of the proletariat and for the intellectual enslavement of the workers. This created a serious obstacle to the cause of uniting the workers of all nationalities."¹⁵

It was for these reasons that Social-Democrats proclaimed the right of nations to self-determination. J.V. Stalin himself defined this term so that there would be no mistake about what was meant.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 319

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 319-320

"The right of self-determination means that only the nation itself has the right to determine its destiny, that no one has the right forcibly to interfere in the life of the nation, to destroy its schools and other institutions, to violate its habits and customs, to repress its language, or curtail its rights."¹⁶

A nation could do whatever it wished.

"The right of self-determination means that a nation may arrange its life in the way it wishes. It has the right to arrange its life on the basis of autonomy. It has the right to enter into federal relations with other nations. It has the right to complete secession. Nations are sovereign, and all nations have equal rights."¹⁷

At face value, these statements appear liberal enough to be accepted by many nationalists. However, Stalin's article had already excluded the Jews and Nomads of Russia. Neither were nations if a strict interpretation of the idea of peoples with distinct territories is applied. Presumably this lack condemned them to extinction just as Engels had passed judgement on the ethnic trash categories.

It is precisely this type of ambiguity which robs Stalin's article and, to a lesser extent, Lenin's writings of any value as a guarantee of national self-determination. A close inspection of other passages in Stalin's work reveals that whether a reader is a knowledgeable Marxist or not, the

¹⁶Ibid., p. 321

¹⁷Ibid.

article does not provide clear guidance as to the proper course of action for a Bolshevik or anyone else.

The following passage appears immediately after the one which spoke of self-determination:

"A nation has the right to arrange its life on autonomous lines. It even has the right to secede. But this does not mean that it should do so under all circumstances, that autonomy, or separation, will everywhere and always be advantageous for a nation, i.e., for its majority, i.e., for the toiling strata."¹⁸

The reference to "toiling masses" throws open the same questions which Engels' did when he advocated war in defense of the proletariat.¹⁹ Whether Stalin intended the text as an advisory to Bolsheviks of other nationalities or was placing conditions on the right to secede is unclear. Whether invasion for the good of proletarians in other countries is authorized or not is a major unanswered question. The confusion increases when a time factor is added.

"All these are problems the solution of which will depend on the concrete historical conditions in which the given nation finds itself.

More than that; conditions, like everything else, change, and a decision which is correct at one particular time may prove to be entirely unsuitable at another."²⁰

¹⁸Ibid., p. 323

¹⁹see page 25 above

²⁰Stalin, Works, Vol. 2, p. 324

The question of whether this remark is to be interpreted as prior to or after the revolution in a country immediately arises. If Russia "reorganized", the status of the border nations would certainly be in doubt because of changed historical conditions.

A Bolshevik who had read Marx extensively would find further more subtle passages which virtually preclude secession. Stalin spoke of freedom of self-determination. Marx taught that any man born after the division of labor had occurred, unless he belonged to the ruling class, was born a slave. This slavery was the result of that very division of labor which had made man dependent upon others for his means of livelihood. Only through communism, the negation of the division of labor, could all men become free. Until such time, phrases such as right, freedom, etc. were ideas used by the ruling class in order to deceive those whom they exploited.

"Only in community (with others) has each individual the means of cultivating his gift in all directions; only in the community, therefore, is personal freedom possible. In the previous substitutes for the community, in the State, etc., personal freedom has existed only for the individuals of this, the ruling class."²¹

In this meaning of the word freedom, the Bolshevik regime,

²¹Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology, p. 91.

in theory, would build the first free state in history by establishing common ownership of the means of production. Any attempts to freely choose secession from this wonderful organization would have to be made by a ruling class of exploiters. If the workers participated in such a secessionist movement they did so only because they had been deluded by bourgeois concepts of a freedom which did not exist in a non-communist state.

Stalin had also stated that the party would not support every demand of a nation. A nation had the right even to return to the old order of things if they so desired but Social-Democracy would not subscribe to such a decision if taken by some institution of a particular nation.²² This apparently inane remark is of particular importance since it actually specifies who will make the decision for federation, union or secession. Again, it is a matter of the Marxist use of the word institution.

"Since the State is the form in which the individuals of a ruling class assert their common interests, and in which the whole civil society of an epoch is epitomised, it follows that the State mediates in the formation of all common institutions."²³

²²Stalin, Works, Vol. 2, p. 321

²³Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology, p. 78.

This Marxist interpretation of the word institution, when applied to Stalin's statement, would mean that there was no institution in a non-socialist nation which could make a demand for secession which would be considered legitimate by the Bolsheviks. Lenin's insistence on democratic centrism in the party even excluded a demand for independence by other Bolsheviks.

Some of Lenin's statements further complicate the issue. Immediately after Stalin's work was published he made the following pronouncement.

"The right of nations to self-determination (i.e., the constitutional guarantee of an absolute free and democratic method of deciding the question of secession) must under no circumstances be confused with the expediency of a given nation's secession. The Social-Democratic Party must decide the latter question exclusively on its merits in each particular case in conformity with the interests of social development as a whole and with the interests of the proletarian class struggle for socialism."²⁴

Although his constant warnings against the use of force tend to indicate that Lenin was speaking of whether or not his party would lend its verbal support to independence movements, the statement may be viewed as a demand for active interference in behalf of the proletariat.

It is little wonder that Stalin's article won him re-

²⁴Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 19, p. 429. My italics.

cognition as a nationalities expert. Every Bolshevik in the party could read the article, apply his own ideas in interpreting it, and come away convinced that he and Stalin were in full agreement.

When Lenin returned to Russia in 1917, he emphasized national self-determination in his struggles with the provisional government which had replaced the Tzar. The slogan was very effective since the assembly was both internally split over that very issue and externally vacillating in its dealings with the nationalities. The campaign began with the April Theses.

"As regards the national question, the proletarian Party first of all must advocate the proclamation and immediate realisation of complete freedom of secession from Russia for all the nations and peoples who were oppressed by tsarism, or who were forcibly joined to, or forcibly kept within the boundaries of, the state, i.e., annexed..... The proletarian party strives to create as large a state as possible, for this is to the advantage of the working people; it strives to draw nations closer together, and bring about their further fusion; but it desires to achieve this aim not by violence, but exclusively through a free fraternal union of the working people of all nations. The more democratic the Russian republic, and the more successfully it organises itself into a Republic of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, the more powerful will be the force of voluntary attraction to such a republic on the part of the working people of all nations."²⁵

²⁵Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 24, p. 73 .

This emphasis on the voluntary nature of the Russian Soviet Republic and its attraction to other nations was not just so many words. Lenin believed it was essential.²⁶ In May of the same year, during his disputes with Rosa Luxemburg, he explained this further.

"We stand for the settlement of problems which the bourgeois revolution has left unsolved. Our attitude to the separatist movement is indifferent, neutral. If Finland, Poland or Ukraine secede from Russia, there is nothing bad in that. What is wrong with it? Anyone who says that is a chauvinist..... We are for a fraternal union of all nations. If there is a Ukrainian republic and a Russian republic, there will be closer contact and greater trust between the two. If the Ukrainians see that we have a soviet republic, they will not secede, but if we have a Millyukov republic, they will..."²⁷

Stalin also believed that force would not be necessary. At the seventh (April) conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B) he stated that mistrust was bound to diminish since Tzarist oppression no longer existed. He thought nine-tenths of the nationalities would not choose to secede.²⁸ Both men pursued

²⁶In his article entitled The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up Lenin stated that if a socialist party declares that it is against the forcible retention of an oppressed nation within the frontiers of an annexing state it is thereby committed to renounce retention by force when it comes to power. (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 22, p. 329). The exemplary attraction of the new socialist state was to be capable of persuading unity. This was one of Engels' arguments (see pages 24-25 above).

²⁷Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 24, pp. 300-301. Also Lenin, "Revision of the Party Program", Collected Works, Vol. 26, p. 1

²⁸Stalin, Works, Vol. 3, p. 56

the "all or nothing" policy up to the time of the coup in October.²⁹ When the take-over occurred, the ambiguity and impracticality of the doctrine for a party of the Bolshevik type were to become painfully evident. Before discussing that failure, it is of interest to note that Lenin made one further contribution to the confusion just prior to October. In his battle to convince the party that the time for action had come, he wrote and published Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power.³⁰ The article advocated the use of terror to achieve revolutionary ends. If he meant to exclude petty bourgeois nationalists or deluded proletarians, he forgot them.

²⁹Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 25 - State and Revolution, pp. 449-450; Vol. 26 - Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power, pp. 115-118. Stalin, Works, Vol. 3 - Against Federalism, pp. 25-33.

³⁰Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 26, pp. 89-136.

VII.

War Communism

Lenin made a definite effort at applying his non-coercive theory when the Bolsheviks seized power. He announced the desire for immediate peace and included a decree against violence or annexations at the Second, All Russia Congress of Soviets on October 25, 1919 (old calendar).

"If any nation whatsoever is forcibly retained within the borders of a given state, if, in spite of its expressed desire - no matter whether expressed in the press, at public meetings, in the decisions of parties, or in protest and uprisings against national oppression - it is not accorded the right to decide the forms of its state existence by a free vote, taken after the complete evacuation of the troops of the incorporating or, generally, of the stronger nation and without the least pressure being brought to bear, such incorporation is annexation, i.e., seizure and violence."¹

At the same meeting, the first provision for a state organization in the form of commissariats was made and there was no mention of either unity or federation.² On November 25, he promised Finnish and Ukrainian independence if this was what they demanded and, in fact, recognized Finland.³ The Ukrainians were another matter and presented the first real

¹Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 26, p. 250

²Ibid., pp. 262-263

³Ibid., p. 344 (This and the dates hereafter are from the new calendar).

challenge to Lenin's national theory. It was found thoroughly lacking.

The beginning of the revolution at first appeared quite favorable in the Ukraine.⁴ In Kiev, the Rada and the Bolsheviks formed an uneasy and distrustful alliance in the overthrow of the forces of the Provisional Government. Once that government was defeated and there was no longer a need for such cooperation, troubles arose. On December 4, 1917, the Bolsheviks called an all Ukrainian Congress of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Soviets in an effort to gain control. They were immediately confronted with two problems. First of all, less than 100 of the 2,500 delegates were Bolsheviks and secondly, an ultimatum from Lenin's Council of Peoples' Commissars in St. Petersburg arrived on the same day. The ultimatum, written by Lenin himself, provides an excellent summary of the problems which had resulted from his seizure of power.⁵ It also marked the beginnings of "War Communism" for the national groups of the former Empire. Lenin began by stating his recognition of Ukrainian independence and national rights. After praising himself for his similar recognition of

⁴The chronology of events in the Ukraine is taken from Richard Pipes, The Formation of the Soviet Union (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964) Chp. III.

⁵Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 26, pp. 361-363.

Finnish rights, he got down to the business at hand.

"We accuse the Rada of conducting, behind a screen of national phrases, a double-dealing bourgeois policy, which has long been expressed in the Rada's non-recognition of the Soviets and of Soviet power in the Ukraine (incidentally, the Rada has refused to convoke a territorial congress of the Ukrainian Soviets immediately, as the Soviets of the Ukraine had demanded). This ambiguous policy, which has made it impossible for us to recognise the Rada as a plenipotentiary representative of the working and exploited masses of the Ukrainian Republic, has lately led the Rada to steps which preclude all possibility of agreement."⁶

The specific problems which Lenin accused the Rada of causing included their demands that Ukrainian troops return home from the front, disarmament of soviet troops, and the granting of freedom to White forces to cross the Ukraine. Then the ultimatum itself was presented.

"At the present time, in view of the circumstances set forth above, the council of Peoples' Commissars, with the full cognisance of the peoples of the Ukrainian and Russian Republics, asks the Rada to answer the following questions:

1. Will the Rada undertake to give up its attempts to disorganise the common front?
2. Will the Rada undertake to refuse transit to any army units on their way to the Don, the Urals or elsewhere, unless it has the sanction of the Commander-in-Chief?
3. Will the Rada undertake to assist the revolutionary troops in their struggle against the counter-revolutionary Cadet-Kaledin revolt?

⁶Ibid., pp. 361-362. The territorial congress of soviets which Lenin demanded was in session when his message arrived. He had no way of knowing this and, consequently, the incredibly poor timing of the ultimatum resulted.

4. Will the Rada undertake to stop attempts to disarm the Soviet regiments and the workers' Red Guard in the Ukraine and immediately return arms to those who had been deprived of them?

In the event no satisfactory answer is received to these questions within 48 hours, the Council of People's Commissars will deem the Rada to be in a state of open war with Soviet power in Russia and the Ukraine."⁷

The Ukrainian Congress rejected the ultimatum as an infringement on their independence. The situation went from bad to worse. On December 19, 1918, Lenin tried to negotiate with the Ukrainians again but they refused to meet his terms.⁸ Indeed, with the confusion which reigned throughout the former empire, it was impossible even if they had wanted to cooperate. The Ukrainians could no more distinguish army deserters from Whites or brigands than Lenin could. His demands were completely unreasonable.

Lenin was saddled with a theory much like Engels' "defense of the fatherland". It had sounded fine until actual application was required. Then matters appeared considerably different. The theory had been satisfactory in choosing one or another independence movement for propaganda purposes. It had worked well in the struggle with the provisional government but when the Bolsheviks came to power, force was avail-

⁷Ibid., pp. 362-363

⁸Ibid., pp. 398-399

able and could be used to decide matters. The need to consolidate the newly won position of power, White opposition and the demands of the war with the Central Powers ensnared Lenin. There was no way to separate the bourgeois and Whites from the nationalist workers and peasants. Independence movements had become as inimical for Lenin's Russia as they had been for Marx's Western Europe.

There were other complications. A great many of Lenin's followers were Great Russians. As these Great-Russian Bolsheviks attempted to secure their position in Russia itself and in the borderlands, chauvinism alienated many more of the minorities. Quite understandably, this form of oppression from St. Petersburg could not be distinguished from the previous Tzarist brand. This attitude removed the last hope of success for Lenin's theory.

Lenin officially abandoned his previous doctrine of state unity and non-coercion in January of 1918 at the Third, All-Russia Congress of Soviets. Either he applied force or the Bolshevik regime would have collapsed. From Lenin's point of view, this would have meant the loss of any hope for the oppressed proletariat for a long time to come. If oppression of the nationalists was necessary to remain in power, so be it. Such movements were bourgeois by definition and if some of the proletariat were participating in the national move-

ments, they would have to be sacrificed for the good of all. A federal constitution was decreed and, although Lenin's speech on the occasion is full of phrases about unity and a world-wide state, he was clearly compromising in order to retain some of the vaunted, exemplary, unifying influence.⁹ In 1931, Stalin attested to the real nature of the concession in an author's note on his article, Against Federalism, which he had written prior to the revolution.¹⁰ He gave three reasons for the compromise.

1. A number of the Nationalities of Russia had separated and federation might result in closer relations.
2. Federation proved not so contradictory to economic ties as had been expected.
3. The national movements had proved to be stronger and much more complex than expected.

When Lenin adopted the federal system, it was to be only a temporary measure. His control of the government was so tenuous even in Russia itself that attaching a federal label to the independent nations of the former Tzarist Empire was quite optimistic. Recalling that Marx had said that the revolution would soon follow in Western Europe, which would solve Lenin's multitude of problems including

⁹Ibid., pp. 479-482

¹⁰Stalin, Works, Vol. 3, pp. 25-33

organizational matters, federation should have lasted for only a matter of months at the most. In the meantime, a holding action was necessary and a declaration of federation might conceivably help.

Economic, martial and national problems steadily worsened for Lenin. German evacuation of the Ukraine provided a second opportunity to apply his national policy.¹¹ When Germany surrendered to the Allies in November of 1918, anarchy reigned in the Ukraine. Earlier, in the fall of that year, the heads of the former Rada had formed the Ukrainian National Union with an executive organ, the Directorate, headed by Vinnichenko. This group managed to overthrow the forces of the Hetmanate, which had ruled during the occupation, and established a government in Kiev on the 14th of December, 1919. While these Ukrainian nationalists were attempting to consolidate their position to insure an independent state, Bolsheviks were already invading. Lenin had not even bothered to go through the motions this time. A "Soviet" Government of the Ukraine had been founded at Kursk with Piatakov at its head. This farcical regime was entering the Ukraine on the heels of the Red Army. When the Directory received news of Soviet

¹¹The chronology of events used is taken from Richard Pipes, The Formation of the Soviet Union, Chp. III.

troop movement in the north and northwest, they protested to Moscow. Chicherin replied that the troops were not Moscow's but Piatakov's, that the Ukraine was experiencing a civil war, and that the Russian Socialist Republic had no aggressive intentions against the independence of the Ukraine.¹² The blatancy of these statements is evidenced by Lenin's telegraphic directive to Serpukhov, Commander-in-Chief of the Red invasion force. It was sent on the 29th of November, 1918, before Chicherin's reply.

"As our troops push on westwards and into the Ukraine, provisional regional Soviet governments are being formed to back up the Soviets in the localities. This has the advantage of depriving the Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian chauvinists of a chance to regard our troop movements as occupation and of creating a favourable situation for further advance. Otherwise our troops would have been in an impossible situation on occupied territory and the local population would not have met them as liberators"¹³

¹²The Ukrainians seem to have achieved two "firsts" of questionable value. The Soviet use of normal diplomacy while conducting actual subversion of a government, the two-camp formula, was applied there for the first time as was the employment of a puppet regime to justify an invasion. The Baltic states received similar treatment. See S.W. Page, "Lenin, the National Question and the Baltic States, 1917-18" in The American Slavic and East European Review, Vol. VII, No. 1, 1949, pp. 15-31

¹³Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 28, p. 225

On February 6, 1919, the Red Army re-entered Kiev. The Soviet Government assumed control but lasted only seven months when Donekin's Whites drove them out a second time. The third and final Soviet government followed the Red Army into the Ukraine again in December of 1919 and established the regime which was to last until World War II.

The Ukraine was not a special case of failure for Lenin's national doctrines. The predominantly Great-Russian Bolsheviki also alienated allies who attempted to cooperate with his new regime. The Bashkir peoples' experience demonstrates the worst example of this type of tragedy.¹⁴

When the Provisional Government came to power, the Bashkirs demanded territorial autonomy. This demand was denied and the Bashkir leadership took steps toward founding a national government. When the Bolshevik coup occurred, the Soviet which was established at Ufa consisted primarily of the Great-Russian nationals who resided in the area and it was hostile to the local Bashkir population. The Bashkirs reciprocated. Their leaders moved to Orenburg and announced the formation of an Autonomous Bashkir Republic which Lenin promptly recognized. This act was, in fact, a promise at the time since

¹⁴This chronology of events is taken from Richard F. Pipes: "The First Experiment in Soviet National Policy: The Bashkir Republic (1917-1920)", in Russian Review Vol. IX, No.4 (October, 1950) pp. 303-319.

the area itself was held by the White General, Dutov. In February of 1918, the Red Army defeated Dutov, entered Orenburg and arrested the Bashkir leader, Validov, along with the Bashkir Council. The Red forces then proceeded to set-up a Bolshevik Temporary Revolutionary Soviet of Bashkirs. Soon after this Soviet was established, Moscow decided to form a Tatar-Bashkir republic. The local Bolshevik Bashkir Soviet opposed unification with the Tatars but Moscow refused to recognize their demand and ordered the territories united. The issue, was temporarily settled when the Whites captured the contested area again.

The short interim period had sufficed to demonstrate that neither the Bashkir nationalists themselves nor the local Bolshevik Soviet could gain a significant degree of autonomy. As a result, when the White army regained the region, Validov was released from prison, a Bashkir military force was formed and it fought with Kolchak. Kolchak's unitarian policies and lack of tact soon caused Bashkir enmity and, in February of 1919, the Bashkir leadership decided that they would change sides and fight for the Bolsheviks if Moscow would insure their independence. This offer was made and accepted. A telegram, signed by both Lenin and Stalin, was addressed to the Bolsheviks at Ufa and it stated the terms of the offer together with orders specifying quite clearly what the Bashkirs

could expect.

"Propose not to alienate Khalikov and to grant amnesty on condition that a common front with Bashkir regiments is set up against Kolchak. The Soviet government pledges its full guarantee for Bashkir national freedom. But naturally, you must deal severely with counter-revolutionaries among the Bashkir population and achieve de facto control to ensure proletarian reliability of Bashkir forces."¹⁵

The Bashkirs, assured of independence, joined the Red Army. By the fall of 1919, Red forces again held the Ural area and the Bashkirs attempted to establish their authority. They encountered immediate opposition from the local Russians. On May 19, 1920, the Soviet government issued a new decree on Bashkir autonomy which was completely centrist. The Bashrevkom objected and when Moscow refused concessions, civil war erupted in Bashkirya. The suppression of the Bashkirs was only a matter of time for the superior Red forces. In late 1920, a new Bashkir Republic was formed with no Bashkirs at all in the government. Moscow, in the face of a firm commitment to grant them their independence in order to gain the support of the excellent Bashkir military had made a complete about face. Lenin's policy would not work even for the peoples who befriended his government.

Stalin is often accused of a great deal of the oppres-

¹⁵Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 28, p. 445 .

sive actions which occurred during the period of dissolution but the charge is not too valid. From 1917 until 1920, Stalin did not have a position of authority which permitted him to cause the antagonisms which arose. The commissariat of nationalities began as an advisory organization and the chairmanship itself was vacant from the Summer of 1918 until the Spring of 1920. Stalin was at the front.¹⁶ When he did resume the chairmanship, his heavy-handed efforts at consolidation and unification caused much unnecessary hardship but, until 1920, Lenin was primarily to blame. Lacking ethnic prejudice himself, he expected others to deal with the various peoples on a similar basis. He held the state authority which he had wrenched out of the hands of the provisional government. He was responsible for the confused policy proclamations. Under the pressure of events, he was the first to officially sanction the infraction of the rule against violence. Once set in motion, he also lacked sufficient power to stop the abuse of national rights.

¹⁶Pipes, The Formation of the Soviet Union, pp. 248-249

VIII.

Two Men - Two Policies

Once Lenin accepted both coercion and federation, his national doctrine became completely unintelligible. While demanding party unity for the Bolsheviks, he was also advocating a federal form of government for states in which that single political party was obtaining power. The two were completely incompatible and, when the massive influx of relatively unsophisticated party members which began in September of 1917 is considered, demanding adherence to both doctrines placed ever increasing stresses on the party itself. One of the best examples of the confusion was revealed at the Eighth Party Congress in 1919. In a dispute with Pyatakov, on March 19, he was barely willing to admit that there was any national movement at all in the Ukraine or that the Ukrainian language was the language of the people there.¹ In the same speech, after stating that there was too much emphasis on self-determination, he spoke of the success which had been achieved through recognition of Finland and emphasized voluntary alliances. While this sort of nonsense demonstrates the type of declarations which the membership

¹Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 29, p. 194. Pyatakov was a Ukrainian Bolshevik seeking some independence for the Ukrainian party.

had to attempt to unravel, it also demonstrated Lenin's own uncertainty. Pyatakov was being attacked for a suspected breach of party unity and the short lived Finnish Soviet example was cited as the ideal of state federation. Lenin's doctrine amounted to unity when he had control and compromise when he did not. The fact that the Ukrainian Bolsheviks failed to understand this was ominous. In 1919, Lenin began to consolidate for a longer struggle. He instituted the Comintern in an effort to achieve the all inclusive solution to his problems, the Western European Revolution, and at the same time began to take a more realistic view of matters in Russia.² By December, he recognized the existence of genuine Ukrainian nationalism and even gave a strong argument for its existence in his article Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.³ He finally realized that his efforts to split the peasantry had failed, gave up the classifications of rich, middle and poor, lumped all peasants into the petty bourgeoisie category, stated that they vacillated between the bourgeoisie and proletariat, emphasized the need for an alliance with them and cited the Ukraine as an example.⁴ By the end of 1919, he went on record that there

²Olga Hess Gankin, "The Bolsheviks and the Founding of the Third International" in The Slavic and East European Review, Vol. XX, 1941. pp. 88-101.

³Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 30, p. 271

⁴Ibid., p. 269

were differences between Great Russian and Ukrainian Communists and that those differences concerned the state independence of the Ukraine and the national question.⁵ He added that concessions would have to be made to the Ukrainians. In the desperate days of late 1919, Lenin was beginning to put some meaning into federation. The concessions were not great but they must have appeared monumental to his unitarian mind.

In February of 1920, Cheka use of the death penalty was abolished and terror began to subside. At the Ninth Party Congress in March of 1920, he announced the end of "War Communism" and the transition to peaceful economic development.

The war with Poland caused a return to many of the old policies but also proved the necessity of reform. Economic conditions in Russia proper, the Ukraine and the borderlands had been poor during the winter of 1919-1920. The Polish war was the last straw. Russia almost starved in the winter of 1920-21 and nearly froze to death while doing it.

During that winter, Lenin drafted the N.E.P. program which amounted to a compromise with both the peasants and the nationalities since many of the minorities were peasant

⁵Ibid., p. 296

peoples.⁶ At the Tenth Party Congress he declared that to continue "War Communism" meant failure of the revolution and emphasized the need for influence instead of terror.⁷ He stated that, until there was a revolution in other countries, only an alliance with the peasantry could save the socialist revolution in Russia and that building socialism in such a manner would take decades. In July, he pronounced Federalism a satisfactory transitional form of government.

"Federation is a transitional form to the complete unity of the working people of different nations. The feasibility of federation has already been demonstrated in practice both by the relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and other Soviet Republics (The Hungarian, Finnish and Latvian in the past, and the Azerbaijan and Ukrainian at present), and by the relations within the R.S.F.S.R. in respect to nationalities which formerly enjoyed neither statehood nor autonomy (e.g., the Bashkir and Tatar autonomous republics in the R.S.F.S.R., founded in 1919 and 1920 respectively)."⁸

Ideologically, full acceptance of a federal state system was very sound. The N.E.P. meant the rise of capitalism in the new Soviet system. According to Marx, rising capitalism was accompanied by a growth of nationalism. If economic concessions were to be made to the petty-bourgeoisie peasants

⁶Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 32, p. 133

⁷Ibid., p. 190

⁸Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 31, pp. 146-147

and they were to become allies, provision had to be made for their increased national aspirations. At the same time, N.E.P. was a ticking bomb from the Marxist viewpoint. If capitalism were allowed to increase, Kulaks would obtain power. The divisive force of nationalism would be strengthened.⁹ In both instances, the Communist Party stood an excellent chance of collapsing. Lenin had started a race against the clock. Realizing the risk, he instituted the decree on party unity along with the N.E.P. to ensure strength and solidarity.¹⁰ A year later, at the Eleventh Congress, the anti-factional decree was passed to further reinforce the party apparatus.

Lenin and Stalin had already begun a drive for state unity through the organization of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. When Stalin returned to the chairmanship of the Commissariat of Nationalities (Narkomnants) in 1920, he immediately began to work toward increasing its scope and authority. His first move was to obtain delegates from the territories and establish a Soviet of nationalities. The necessary decree was obtained from the

⁹Stalin spoke of its danger during the conviction of Sultan Galiev for "national deviation" in 1923. (Stalin, Marxism and the National and Colonial Question, New York: International Publishers, p. 178)

¹⁰Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 32, p. 248

state apparatus on May 19, 1920.¹¹ A year later, Stalin obtained authorization to send delegates to the territories, including treaty and federated republics, for purposes of "supervising" fulfillment of decrees by the Central Federal Authority of the R.S.F.S.R.¹² Lenin knew of this maneuver and approved of it for his signature appears on the document. This decree amounted to a complete shift in the character of Narkomnants in that it changed from an advisory organization to administrative functions and the republics were lashed together through the Nationalities organization as well as the party. It is interesting to note that the list of representatives for the Soviet of Nationalities included the "head of the Jewish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Finnish and Estonian departments for Nationalities."¹³ This had the appearance of being very democratic and, at the same time, representatives were ready in case of an opportunity to establish a new revolutionary government. It may or may not have occurred to Stalin or Lenin that they had also made a de facto application of the much maligned "Bauer" formula by accepting representatives of

¹¹Rudolf Schlesinger, Ed., The Nationalities Problem and Soviet Administration (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited, 1956) pp. 33-35

¹²Ibid., pp. 40-41

¹³Ibid., p. 42

"territoriless" peoples.

Stalin's authority became even greater on July 27, 1922 through another All-Russian state decree.¹⁴ The directive assigned Narkomnants the following duties:

1. Draft all projects and measures relating to national policy.
2. Take necessary measures for application of common federal legislation and ordinances.
3. Give opinions on all financial and material matters.
4. Participate in drafting of an all-federal system of taxation.
5. Supervise common work of the autonomous republics and regions.
6. Defend national rights.
7. Establish representatives on the central executive committees and Soviets of People's Commissars in individual Republics and autonomous regions.
8. Negotiate with representatives of the nationalities.
9. Collect material on modus vivendi of the nationalities (Census).
10. Train corps of political and soviet workers of non-Russian nationality.

J. V. Stalin's Commissariat had virtually become the government of the R.S.F.S.R. for everything except military affairs

¹⁴Walter Russell Batsell, Soviet Rule in Russia (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929) pp. 184-191.

and negotiations with non-socialist countries. This situation would have been dangerous for the few remaining minority prerogatives under any circumstances but for Stalin to have achieved this degree of authority was disastrous. His interpretation of federalism was no different from absolute unity. At the time that the first constitution was issued in 1918, he had speculated on the form that the federal system would take in actual operation.

"Military and naval affairs, foreign affairs, railways, post and telegraph, currency, trade agreements and general economic, financial and banking policy will probably all come within the province of the Central Council of People's Commissars. All other affairs, and primarily the methods of implementation of general decrees, education, judicature, administration, etc., will come within the province of the regional Councils of People's Commissars."¹⁵

This interpretation left nothing to the nationalities except to follow directions and ensure compliance.

While these centrist encroachments were in progress, the party was developing some non-international trends. In the Ukraine and Georgia, old Bolsheviks resented the invasions on their local administration which Moscow made with increasing frequency.¹⁶ The antagonisms mounted and over-

¹⁵Stalin, Works, Vol. 4, p. 72

¹⁶Pipes, The Formation of the Soviet Union, pp. 266-276

flowed in the winter of 1922. Stalin attempted to consolidate Georgia, Azerbaidjan and Armenia into the Transcaucasian Republic as a step toward formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Georgian Communists deeply resented this maneuver, not because they were opposed to the Union itself, but rather on account of the reduction in statuts for Georgia which federation into Transcaucasia implied. Belorussia and the Ukraine were to enter the Union directly. If Georgia did not, it amounted to a declaration that Georgia was a second-rate nation. During the debates, Lenin received telegrams and letters from Georgia which complained of threats against Georgian communists and requested an inquiry. Ordzhonikidze, one of Stalin's accomplices was singled out as particularly offensive. Two commissions were sent to Georgia to investigate. Dzerzhinsky, another of Stalin's close associates, was sent first. Rykov, whose relations with Stalin were not close, was later assigned a similar task. Rykov returned first and reported to Lenin. There is no record of what he said but it must have been unfavorable for Stalin's cohorts. It may have included the fact that Ordzhonikidze had administered a beating to one of his fellow Georgian party members who opposed the unification plan.¹⁷

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 276-278. Lenin refers to this incident as evidence of failure of the unification plan. (below n. 110)

This was the point beyond which Lenin allowed no one to go. The party members were sacrosanct and violence toward them was sacrilege. His purges of the party had been ones of expulsion and he had even been reluctant to execute the Tzarist police spy, Roman Malenovsky.¹⁸ Soon after Rykov's report, Lenin dictated a condemnation of Stalin, Dzerzhinsky and Ordzhonikidze.

That condemnation, written in December of 1922, is presented here in full since it consists not only of an attack on Stalin and his accomplices but also the admission that the whole plan of centralization had been too rapid and that severe abuses had resulted. For a Nationalist, it also demonstrates that the communist party cannot even protect minorities among its own membership.

"THE QUESTION OF NATIONALITIES OR "AUTONOMISATION".
I suppose I have been very remiss with respect to the workers of Russia for not having intervened energetically and decisively enough in the notorious question of autonomisation, which, it appears, is officially called the question of the union of Soviet socialist republics.
When this question arose last summer, I was ill; and then in autumn I relied too much on my recovery and on the October and December plenary meetings giving me an opportunity of intervening in this question. However, I did not manage to attend the October Plenary Meeting (when this question came up) or the one in December, and so the question passed me by almost completely.

¹⁸John S. Reshetar, Jr., A Concise History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (New York/Washington/London: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1964) p. 218

I have only had time for a talk with Comrade Dzerzhinsky, who came from the Caucasus and told me how this matter stood in Georgia. I have also managed to exchange a few words with Comrade Zinoviev and express my apprehensions on this matter. From what I was told by Comrade Dzerzhinsky, who was at the head of the commission sent by the C.C. to "investigate" the Georgian incident, I could only draw the greatest apprehensions. If matters had come to such a pass that Orjonikidze could go to the extreme of applying physical violence, as Comrade Dzerzhinsky informed me, we can imagine what a mess we have got ourselves into. Obviously the whole business of "autonomisation" was radically wrong and badly timed.

It is said that a united apparatus was needed. Where did that assurance come from? Did it not come from that same Russian apparatus which, as I pointed out in one of the preceding sections of my diary, we took over from tsarism and slightly anointed with Soviet oil?

There is no doubt that that measure should have been delayed somewhat until we could say that we vouched for our apparatus as our own. But now, we must, in all conscience, admit the contrary; the apparatus we call ours is, in fact, still quite alien to us; it is a bourgeois and tsarist hotch-potch and there has been no possibility of getting rid of it in the course of the past five years without the help of other countries and because we have been "busy" most of the time with military engagements and the fight against famine.

It is quite natural that in such circumstances the "freedom to secede from the union" by which we justify ourselves will be a mere scrap of paper, unable to defend the non-Russians from the onslaught of that really Russian man, the Great-Russian chauvinist, in substance a rascal and a tyrant, such as the typical Russian bureaucrat is. There is no doubt that the infinitesimal percentage of Soviet and sovietised workers will drown in that tide of chauvinistic Great-Russian riffraff like a fly in milk.

It is said in defence of this measure that the People's Commissariats directly concerned with national psychology and national education were set up as separate bodies. But there the question arises: can these People's Commissariats be made quite independent? and secondly: were we careful enough to take measures to provide the non-Russians with a real safeguard against the truly Russian bully? I do not think we took such measures although we could and should have done so.

I think that Stalin's haste and his infatuation with pure administration, together with his spite against the notorious "nationalist-socialism", played a fatal role here. In politics spite generally plays the basest of roles.

I also fear that Comrade Dzerzhinsky, who went to the Caucasus to investigate the "crime" of those "nationalist-socialists", distinguished himself there by his truly Russian frame of mind (it is common knowledge that people of other nationalities who have become Russified overdo this Russian frame of mind) and that the impartiality of his whole commission was typified well enough by Orjonikidze's "manhandling". I think that no provocation or even insult can justify such Russian manhandling and that Comrade Dzerzhinsky was inexcusably guilty in adopting a light-hearted attitude towards it.

For all the citizens in the Caucasus Orjonikidze was the authority. Orjonikidze had no right to display that irritability to which he and Dzerzhinsky referred. On the contrary, Orjonikidze should have behaved with a restraint which cannot be demanded of any ordinary citizen, still less of a man accused of a "political" crime. And, to tell the truth, those nationalist-socialists were citizens who were accused of a political crime, and the terms of the accusation were such that it could not be described otherwise.

Here we have an important question of principle: how is internationalism to be understood?

Lenin

December 30, 1922

Taken down by M.V.

Continuation of the notes.

December 31, 1922

THE QUESTION OF NATIONALITIES OR "AUTONOMISATION" (cont.)

In my writings on the national question I have already said that an abstract presentation of the question of nationalism in general is of no use at all. A distinction must necessarily be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and that of an oppressed nation, the nationalism of a big nation and that of a small nation.

In respect of the second kind of nationalism we, nationals of a big nation, have nearly always been guilty, in historic practice, of an infinite number of cases of violence; furthermore, we commit violence

and insult an infinite number of times without noticing it. It is sufficient to recall my Volga reminiscences of how non-Russians are treated; how the Poles are not called by any other name than Polyachishka, how the Tatar is nicknamed Prince, how the Ukrainians are always Khokhols and the Georgians and other Caucasian nationals always Kapkasians.

That is why internationalism on the part of oppressors or "great" nations, as they are called (though they are great only in their violence, only great as bullies), must consist not only in the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation, the great nation, that must make up for the inequality which obtains in actual practice. Anybody who does not understand this has not grasped the real proletarian attitude to the national question, he is still essentially petty bourgeois in his point of view and is, therefore, sure to descend to the bourgeois point of view.

What is important for the proletarian? For the proletarian it is not only important, it is absolutely essential that he should be assured that the non-Russians place the greatest possible trust in the proletarian class struggle. What is needed to ensure this? Not merely formal equality. In one way or another, by one's attitude or by concessions, it is necessary to compensate the non-Russians for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and the insults to which the government of the "dominant" nation subjected them in the past.

I think it is unnecessary to explain this to Bolsheviks, to Communists, in greater detail. And I think that in the present instance, as far as the Georgian nation is concerned, we have a typical case in which a genuinely proletarian attitude makes profound caution, thoughtfulness and a readiness to compromise a matter of necessity for us. The Georgian who is neglectful of this aspect of the question, or who carelessly flings about accusations of "nationalist-socialist", (whereas he himself is a real and true "nationalist-socialist", and even a vulgar Great-Russian bully), violates, in substance, the interests of proletarian class solidarity, for nothing holds up the development and strengthening of proletarian class solidarity so much as national injustice; "offended" nationals

are not sensitive to anything so much as to the feeling of equality and the violation of this equality, if only through negligence or jest - to the violation of that equality by their proletarian comrades. That is why in this case it is better to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency towards the national minorities. That is why, in this case, the fundamental interest of proletarian solidarity, and consequently of the proletarian class struggle, requires that we never adopt a formal attitude to the national question, but always take into account the specific attitude of the proletarian of the oppressed (or small) nation towards the oppressor (or great) nation.

Lenin

Taken down by M.V.
December 31, 1922

Continuation of the notes.

December 31, 1922

What practical measures must be taken in the present situation?

Firstly, we must maintain and strengthen the union of socialist republics. Of this there can be no doubt. This measure is necessary for us and it is necessary for the world communist proletariat in its struggle against the world bourgeoisie and its defence against bourgeois intrigues.

Secondly, the union of socialist republics must be retained for its diplomatic apparatus. By the way, this apparatus is an exceptional component of our state apparatus. We have not allowed a single influential person from the old tsarist apparatus into it. All sections with any authority are composed of Communists. That is why it has already won for itself (this may be said boldly) the name of a reliable communist apparatus purged to an incomparably greater extent of the old tsarist, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements than that which we have had to make do with in other People's Commissariats.

Thirdly, exemplary punishment must be inflicted on Comrade Orjonikidze (I say this all the more regretfully as I am one of his personal friends and have worked with him abroad) and the investigation of all the material which Dzerzhinsky's commission has collected must be completed or started over again to correct the enormous mass of wrongs and biased judge-

ments which it doubtlessly contains. The political responsibility for all this truly Great-Russian nationalist campaign must, of course, be laid on Stalin and Dzerzhinsky.

Fourthly, the strictest rules must be introduced on the use of the national language in the non-Russian republics of our union, and these rules must be checked with special care. There is no doubt that our apparatus being what it is, there is bound to be, on the pretext of unity in the railway service, unity in the fiscal service and so on, a mass of truly Russian abuses. Special ingenuity is necessary for the struggle against these abuses, not to mention special sincerity on the part of those who undertake this struggle. A detailed code will be required, and only the nationals living in the republic in question can draw it up at all successfully. And then we cannot be sure in advance that as a result of this work we shall not take a step backward at our next Congress of Soviets, i.e., retain the union of Soviet socialist republics only for military and diplomatic affairs, and in all other respects restore full independence to the individual People's Commissariats.

It must be borne in mind that the decentralisation of the People's Commissariats and the lack of co-ordination in their work as far as Moscow and other centres are concerned can be compensated sufficiently by Party authority, if it is exercised with sufficient prudence and impartiality; the harm that can result to our state from a lack of unification between the national apparatus and the Russian apparatus is infinitely less than that which will be done not only to us, but to the whole International, and to the hundreds of millions of the peoples of Asia, which is destined to follow us on to the stage of history in the near future. It would be unpardonable opportunism if, on the eve of the debut of the East, just as it is awakening, we undermined our prestige with its peoples, even if only by the slightest crudity or injustice towards our own non-Russian nationalities. The need to rally against the imperialists of the West, who are defending the capitalist world, in one thing. There can be no doubt about that and it would be superfluous for me to speak about my unconditional approval of it. It is another thing when we our-

selves lapse, even if only in trifles, into imperialist attitudes towards oppressed nationalities, thus undermining all our principled sincerity, all our principled defence of the struggle against imperialism. But the morrow of world history will be a day when the awakening peoples oppressed by imperialism are finally aroused and the decisive long and hard struggle for their liberation begins.

Lenin

December 31, 1922

Taken down by M.V." 19

Lenin's illness prevented him from personally confronting Stalin and the others. He entrusted the prosecution to Trotsky who failed to carry out the instructions.²⁰ Why Trotsky refused to use this weapon against Stalin at the time may never be known. When he did attempt to use it in 1927, Stalin referred to the accusation as "tittle-tattle" and stated that the incident was insignificant.²¹ Without the help of Lenin or Trotsky, the communists from the minorities had no hope of preventing Stalin's new plans. At the Twelfth Party Congress in 1923, he dismissed the Georgian opposition as "not all there in their upper storeys" and blamed chauvinism of both the Great Russian and local variety on the N.E.P.²² Self-determination was thrown out.

"There are instances when the right to self-determination comes into conflict with another, higher

¹⁹Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 36, pp. 605-611

²⁰Pipes, The Formation of the Soviet Union, p. 289

²¹Stalin, Works, Vol. 9, p. 68

²²Stalin, Works, Vol. 5, pp. 236 and 301

right - the right of the working class which attained power, to fortify its power. In such cases, it must be stated frankly the right of self-determination, cannot be and must not serve as an obstacle to the realization of the right of the working class to its own dictatorship. The first must recede before the second."²³

A resolution for a constitution even more centrist than the one which had caused the dispute was passed and the resultant decree included the introduction of a second chamber of national representatives into the Supreme Soviet.²⁴ This moved Stalin's entire Commissariat of Nationalities and its associated Soviet directly into the U.S.S.R.'s government apparatus on an equal basis. Passage of only Stalin's legislation was assured. When Lenin died in 1924, Stalin chanted his litany of praise and vowed allegiance to the Marxist-Leninist tradition. The fourth article of that creed must have caused deep despair for party members from the minorities.

"Departing from us, Comrade Lenin enjoined us to strengthen and extend the Union of Republics. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that this behest, too, we shall fulfill with honour."²⁵

²³Stalin, Works, Vol. 5, p. 270

²⁴Batsell, on.cit., no. 301-320. The decree and constitution which resulted both appear.

²⁵Stalin, Works, Vol. 6, p. 51

Stalin might as well have declared his coronation as Tzar of all the Russia's.

Lenin's death and the subsequent ratification of the Stalinist constitution ended the paper war against both party and non-party nationalists. Stalin had begun the process of building a socialist nation according to his own definition of the term. The constitution provided the base of common territory and economic bond. The superstructural problems of culture and language were attacked next. In a speech at a meeting of the students of the University of the Peoples of the East in May of 1925, he announced the formula of proletarian in content and national in form as the ideal for a socialist state. The declaration is a fairly accurate rendition of Marx's statement that the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie would be national in form but not in substance.²⁶ Stalin's "new" theory soon proved as faulty in application as had earlier Marxist-Leninist policies on the national question. When efforts were made at permitting the use of national languages in education, they proved to be a divisive force and infusion of socialist principles was of little help. Knowledge of language led to investigations of national literature, history, philosophy

²⁶Stalin, Marxism and the National and Colonial Question, p. 210.

and tradition, all of which were replete with non-Marxist ideas. National pride received new impetus and animosity toward the Great-Russian Communist Party grew. In the Ukraine, attempts were even made to Ukrainianize Russian Communists. After a full scale battle of words between Russians and minority groups at a meeting of the All-Union Central Executive Committee in 1926, Stalin dispatched a letter to the Ukraine which condemned their non-Marxist cultural activities.²⁷ It marked the beginnings of the real onslaught against national language and culture.²⁸ Stalin, who may have had some thought of Russian as the common language in a multi-lingual state before these events, chose to support complete Russification of the minorities.²⁹

Collectivization of the peasantry and the assault on national cultures and language led to rising opposition and Stalin called a temporary halt in 1930. The article, Dizzy With Success stopped collectivization for a short time and

²⁷Schlesinger, op. cit., pp. 78-81

²⁸A full description of the battle between the Ukrainians and Moscow over the language issue is contained in John S. Reshetar's "National Deviation in the Soviet Union" in The American Slavic and East European Review, pp. 162-174. The final "defeat" came in 1933 when the Ukrainian writer Khvylovy and the old-Bolshevik Skrypnyk, also a Ukrainian and minister of education, committed suicide in protest to Russification.

²⁹For a brief but comprehensive article on Russification see Abdurakhman Avtorkhanov, The Communist Party Apparatus (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1966) Chp. XVIII. Walter Kolarz, Russia and Her Colonies (London: George Philip and Son Limited, 1952) provides a more detailed account.

Stalin's report at the Sixteenth Party Congress condemned Great-Russian chauvinism as a national deviation.³⁰

"The essence of the deviation towards Great-Russian chauvinism is an endeavour to ignore national differences of language, culture and mode of life; an endeavour to prepare the way for the liquidation of the national republics and regions; an endeavour to undermine the principle of national equality and bring into disrepute the Party policy of naturalising the administrative apparatus, and of naturalising the press, schools and other state and public organisations."³¹

This concession to the nationalists was followed by a slight rejuvenation of efforts by some non-Russian communists to retain and strengthen national culture among the minorities. However, by 1934, Stalin renewed the attack. At the Seventeenth Party Congress in 1934, both forms of deviation came under fire.

"The deviation toward nationalism is the adaptation of the Internationalist policy of the working class to the nationalist policy of the bourgeoisie. The deviation towards nationalism reflects the attempts of "One's own national" bourgeoisie to undermine the Soviet system and to restore capitalism..... If you want to keep both these deviations (Great-Russian nationalism and local nationalism) under fire then aim primarily against this source, against those who depart from internationalism - regardless of whether

³⁰J. Stalin, Problems of Leninism (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1953) p. 419

³¹Stalin, Marxism and the National and Colonial Question, p. 256.

the deviation is towards local nationalism or toward Great-Russian nationalism."³²

By citing both forms of nationalism as dangerous, Stalin gave the Great-Russians a free hand since they dominated both the party and government. No more was heard of the deviation toward Great-Russian chauvinism.

During World War II, the Nazi invasion provided an example of how well Stalin's policy had worked. Ukrainians, Chechens, Ingushi, Kalmyks, Karachi and Balkars welcomed the Germans. Only Hitler's own racist policies prevented his forces from receiving continued support from these people.³³ When Soviet troops regained these territories, massive deportations occurred.³⁴ Stalin could not afford to have these

³²Stalin, Problems of Leninism, p. 640

³³Roman Smal-Stocki, The Captive Nations (New York: Bookman Associates, 1960) pp. 65-75. Smal-Stocki indicates that the following peoples fought with Germany against the USSR

Ukrainians (in all formations)	220,000
Turkestanians	110,000
Caucasians	110,000
Tatars	35,000
Lithuanians	27,000
Latvians	30,000
Estonians	20,000
Kalmyks	15,000
Belo-Russians	10,000
Cossacks	70,000

³⁴R. Conquest, The Soviet Deportations of Nationalities (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1960). The number of deportations has been subject of much argument. Conquest estimates 84,000 for the Crimean Tatars, Kalmyks, Chechen and Ingushi, Karachi and Balkars. The total amounted to a depopulation of about 60,000 sq. miles. All Ukrainians did not escape as Khrushchev insinuated. About 1,000,000 were deported (Ibid., p. 69)

nationalities in the rear of his army. Khrushchev later admitted that the Ukrainian nation as a whole escaped this fate because of sheer numbers.³⁵

The conflict between Lenin and Stalin over the national policy was purely a matter of tactics. Both men wanted the same goals and, as Lenin's memorandum indicates, he only believed that autonomization had been too rapid. The important question is whether his reform would have worked or not and the anti-faction party doctrine seems to indicate that it would not. There was scarcely any protection for national rights in the state organization from the time of the first constitution. The federal decrees themselves were initiated by Moscow without participation by a third executor. It was the equivalent of France establishing a federation of Western Europe by announcing that its constitution applied throughout the area. The difference was that Moscow had enough strength to enforce the declaration on the nationalities.

Lenin's reform called for a return of all commissariats except military and foreign affairs to the republics but there is no mention of provisions for national blocs in par-

³⁵N. Khrushchev, "Address At The Twentieth Party Congress" in The Anti-Stalin Campaign and International Communism, a selection of Documents edited by the Russian Institute Columbia University (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956) p. 57.

ty disputes. Instead, they are specifically precluded by the anti-faction policy. This meant that none of the national minority parties could form a group of representatives at a party congress in order to oppose a Great-Russian policy. Even a two member group was subject to a charge of building factions and destroying party harmony. Furthermore, Democratic-Centrism demanded that all lower echelons carry out the decisions of the higher organs so Moscow still controlled in all the regions. There was no protective mechanism built in and retention of the military provided the strength of arms to back up Great-Russian policy if necessary.

All of Lenin's efforts to provide organizational unity, to achieve cooperation and to avoid coercion were doomed to failure. The single most important ingredient, volition, was lacking. In this sense, Stalin was the only way to achieve communist unity.

IX.

Rents and Patches in the Monolith

In the decade from 1943 until 1953, Stalin followed a script in Eastern Europe which was only a slight revision of the tragedy which the Bolsheviki had written during the pre-war years in the U.S.S.R. The minor actors were changed and a new title, "People's Democracy", was added but the main theme remained intact. It is usually dangerous to re-view history and draw close parallels since distortions frequently result. However, in this case, there is a preponderance of evidence to justify such an analysis.

1. Stalin, the nationalities expert, was the directing influence during both periods.
2. World War resulted in similar circumstances during both periods.
3. The Red Army or Communist forces occupied Eastern Europe as they had in Russia and the borderlands in 1920-21.
4. Agrarian economies and countries with limited democratic experience were involved in both instances.¹

Perhaps the strongest argument for similarity is the fact that the policy was being devised and executed by avowed

¹The Czechs were an obvious exception to this condition. They also survived for the longest period as a coalition government. A concise history of the countries of Eastern Europe between 1918 and 1945 is available in H. Seton-Watson, Eastern Europe between the Wars, 1918-1941 (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1962).

Marxists, immersed in historical analysis and preoccupied with the application of historically relevant categories. Further investigation reveals that many of the same strategic errors were made.

When Germany had threatened to destroy the Bolsheviks in 1918, the demonstrative diplomatic ploy was peace without annexations and self-determination. On the 24th Anniversary of the October Revolution in 1941, Stalin declared that the Soviet Union did not and could not have war aims which would include seizure of foreign territories or the subjugation of foreign peoples in either Europe or Asia.² A year later on the same occasion, his speech repeated these anti-annexationist assertions and included the assurance that national sovereignty would be restored along with the right of every nation to arrange its affairs as it wished.³ By November of 1943, the war was progressing much better and, although Stalin was still leaning heavily on national rights, he had some specific peoples whom he hoped would benefit from Soviet democracy.

"Together with our allies we shall have to:

1. Liberate the peoples of Europe from the fascist invaders and help them reconstitute

²Joseph Stalin, The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union (New York: International Publishers, 1945) p. 33

³Ibid., p. 73

their national states, dismembered by the fascist enslavers - the peoples of France, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Greece and other states, which are under the German yoke, must again become free and independent;

2. give the liberated peoples of Europe the full right and freedom to decide for themselves the question of their form of government;
3. take measures to inflict severe punishment and retribution for all the crimes they committed on all the fascist criminals, who are responsible for the present war and the suffering of the peoples;
4. establish such an order in Europe that would completely exclude the possibility of new aggression on the part of Germany;
5. create long-term economic, political, and cultural collaboration among the nations of Europe, based on mutual trust and mutual aid, for the purpose of rehabilitating the economies and cultures destroyed by the Germans."⁴

Stalin intended to "liberate" Poland according to his own terms. The Katyn Forest incident had served as an excuse to sever diplomatic relations with the Polish government exiled in London. A Polish Committee of National Liberation was established in 1944. It consisted of an amalgamation of the Polish Workers Party (Communist), which had remained in Poland during the war, and the Union of Polish Patriots, a Moscow sponsored group.⁵ The Polish National Committee

⁴Ibid., pp. 105-106

⁵Vaclav Benes et al., Eastern European Government and Politics (New York/Evanston/London: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1966) p. 28

(Lublin Government) marched into Poland behind the Red Army just as Pyatakov had in the Ukraine in 1918. Stalin announced his intentions to President Roosevelt in a message on December 27, 1944.

"I have to say frankly that if the Polish Committee of National Liberation will transform itself into a Provisional Polish Government then, in view of the above-said, the Soviet Government will not have any serious ground for postponement of the question of its recognition. It is necessary to bear in mind that in the strengthening of a pro-Allied and democratic Poland the Soviet Union is interested more than any other power not only because the Soviet Union is bearing the main brunt of the battle for liberation of Poland but also because Poland is a border state with the Soviet Union and the problem of Poland is inseparable from the problem of security of the Soviet Union."⁶

The U.S.S.R. recognized the Lublin government on the eve of the Yalta conference.⁷ Roosevelt and Churchill were presented with a fait accompli and there was little which could be done because of the need to pursue the war with Germany and Japan.⁸

⁶Joseph Stalin, Correspondence with Churchill, Attlee, Roosevelt and Truman 1941-45 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1958) Vol. II, Document No. 254, p. 181.

⁷Alvin Z. Rubinstein, Ed., The Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union (New York: Random House, 1960) p. 196. Declaration on Soviet-Polish Relations - Tass Communique - January 10, 1944 (USSR Information Bulletin, Vol. IV, No.7 (1944), p.1.

⁸Churchill summed up the situation quite well with the question, "What would have happened if we had quarrelled with Russia while Germany still had two or three hundred divisions on the fighting front?" in Winston S. Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy (New York: Bantam Books, 1962) p. 345.

The idea of security for the Soviet Union appeared again at the Potsdam Conference in 1945. Stalin, with his usual tact, declared:

"Any freely elected government in these countries the former German satellites in the Balkans will be an anti-Soviet government and we cannot allow that."⁹

The national sovereignty of Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary were subject to conditions which favored Moscow. Stalin might have said that the interests of the proletariat sometimes over-ruled self-determination as he had in 1924.

With Communist forces in firm control, Stalin lapsed into an ominous silence on the subject of Eastern Europe after 1945. This fact alone is indicative of the lack of ideological significance in the doctrine of "People's Democracy" which was adopted to describe the new acquisitions. Definitions of the term were left to Soviet scholars or Party leaders in the countries themselves. Without a definitive statement from the center, there were a variety of attempts at stating just what the new form of government was. About the only agreement was that it had some proletarian content, was definitely not the dictatorship of the proletariat and was not similar to Soviet "democracy".¹⁰

⁹Philip E. Mosely, "Across the Green Table from Stalin", Current History (Philadelphia: Current History Inc., 1948) p.131.

¹⁰Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, The Soviet Bloc (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1961) pp. 27-32.

Lenin could have defined it for them. It was a temporary alliance with the petty-bourgeoisie, a transitional period for the building of socialism and a period of allowing some capitalism while the party consolidated its position. Eastern Europe was experiencing its N.E.P.

Stalin held firm to the old policy line. Party unity was not a serious problem. In addition to the Red military presence, his own people controlled the majority of the local Communist Parties in Eastern Europe and the secret police were actively ferreting out "fascists". Democratic-centralism and anti-fractionalism were still in effect. The old Commissariat of Nationalities was not available to act as a subversive state unification vehicle but this was easily remedied. A series of friendship and mutual aid agreements served just as well.¹¹ In 1926, the formula of socialist in content and national in form had marked the beginnings of the drive for cultural orthodoxy. The establishment of the Cominform in 1947 fulfilled this function and provided for even greater party unity. Soon after the Cominform was founded, economic plans similar to Stalin's 1928 project began to appear and collectivization received increased

¹¹Ibid., pp. 108-118. Brzezinski has reduced the more than 50 treaties to a matrix format.

emphasis. There was even a device similar to the Transcaucasian federation in the offing. In 1922-23, Stalin had welded the peoples of the Caucasus together prior to incorporation. This maneuver might be best described as "unite and conquer". The conflicts between Georgians, Azerbaïdjanians and Armenians over the federation had weakened the opposition to Moscow which any of these nationalities might have been able to mount as individuals. Moscow had been able to control with a minimum of exertion and to take the role of benevolent protector and arbiter of intra-federative disputes. In 1947, Tito's Yugoslavia and Hoxha's Albania were scheduled for the same treatment as is evident from Albania's conspicuous absence from Cominform membership. Tito's aid to Greece would indicate that Macedonia was probably also slated for the Balkan federation and part of Bulgaria may have been on the list as well.¹² At this point, Stalin's plan miscarried. Just as in 1923, when too rapid a pace had almost cost him his party post, he pushed Tito too hard. Tito was also a nationality expert and the part he was being assigned to play in the Balkans was shaping up to be a little too much like that of the Georgians. He was certainly in favor of in-

¹²Adam B. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence (New York/Washington: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968) p. 463

creasing Yugoslav holdings in the Balkans and federation of the Soviet type under Tito as an independent would have increased his power immensely. However, if Stalin intended to use the Balkan federation in the same manner as the former Caucasus fiasco, Tito was in deep trouble. Once Moscow moved toward unification, Tito would become one of a large group of nationalist deviants unless he received special treatment from Stalin. If unification were approaching, it meant that Tito would have to trust in Stalin's word that Yugoslavia, with its newly federated territories, would receive a privileged position. In addition to the obvious historical parallel indicating a trend toward that unification, the whole subject had already been discussed. Sadchikov, the Soviet ambassador in Yugoslavia, had reported the following conversation with Kardelj in June of 1945.

"Kardelj said he would like the Soviet Union to regard them, not as representatives of another country, capable of solving questions independently, but as representatives of one of the future Soviet Republics, and the CPY as a part of the All-Union Communist Party, that is, that our relations should be based on the prospect of Yugoslavia becoming in the future a constituent part of the USSR. For this reason they would like us to criticize them frankly and openly and to give them advice which would direct the internal and foreign policy of Yugoslavia along the right path."¹³

¹³The Soviet-Yugoslav Dispute, Text of the published correspondence (London and New York: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1948) p. 38

Stalin, attempting to reassure Tito, quoted this statement during the dispute which erupted in early 1948 and denied that there was a plan such as that to which Kardelj had referred. Tito was an old and experienced party man with a powerful instinct for self-preservation. He was clever, had been in Moscow during the purges, and he knew J.V. Stalin well. Tito balked. Stalin tried to engineer his expulsion and failed. Lenin's ill health and untimely death had allowed Stalin to cover his tracks in 1923-24 but Tito remained disgustingly healthy and loquacious. The Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan provided a way out and Tito took it at a dead run. The cold war, which was providing the same false urgency as the capitalist encirclement propaganda of the 1920's, had backfired badly.

The defection was a major blow for Moscow but Stalin continued with his schedule in the remainder of the Satellite countries. He managed to make a little use of the setback. When the time for the purge came, he was able to execute Titoists instead of Trotzkyites. Stalin had used, oppressed and subverted national movements for 30 years. The nationalities finally had their day. It is impossible to say when Stalin intended to execute his constitutional coup in Eastern Europe but it could not have been far away when the U.S. re-armed for the Korean war. In 1949 and 1950, Hungary and Al-

bania adopted constitutions which are virtual copies of the U.S.S.R. model.¹⁴ The grand scheme died a slow death. In 1952, Rumania and Poland followed suit.

When Stalin died, the Kremlin began a concerted effort at patching up the rift with Yugoslavia. Malenkov began the campaign and Khrushchev continued it. In 1955, the mountain went to Mohammed when Khrushchev visited Belgrade and hauled out all of the Leninist teachings on the relations among socialist countries. His arrival speech included the following passage.

"True to the teachings of the founder of the Soviet state, Vladimir Ilich Lenin, the government of the Soviet Union bases its relations with other countries, big and small, on the principles of the peaceful co-existence of states, on the principles of equality, non-interference, respect for sovereignty and national independence, on the principles of non-aggression and recognition that any encroachments by states upon the territorial integrity of other states are impermissible. We hope that the relations between our countries will in the future too develop on the basis of these principles, for the good of our peoples."¹⁵

¹⁴H. Gordon Skilling, The Governments of Communist East Europe (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1955) p.49

¹⁵N. Khrushchev, "Speech on Arrival at Belgrade, May 26, 1955" (English translation in Soviet News, May 27, 1955; reprinted in Documents on International Affairs, 1955, pp.265-66) in Robert V. Daniels, Ed., A Documentary History of Communism (New York: Random House, 1960) pp. 223-224.

The major move came in 1956 at the 20th Party Congress when Khrushchev delivered the "secret" speech.¹⁶ If Khrushchev believed he could limit the implications of his address to abolition of Stalinist excesses, he was sadly mistaken. In addition to the speech itself, Lenin's "Testament" and the Memorandum on Autonomization were both distributed at the congress.¹⁷ Khrushchev had hung out thirty years' accumulation of the Party's dirty laundry on a single line. These events and Khrushchev's earlier visit to Belgrade combined to create the appearance that recalcitrance was not only permissible but laudatory. It seemed as though he actually intended to deal with other national parties on an equal basis and to adopt the Leninist advice of 1922. Then, Imre Nagy went too far. He attempted to guarantee Khrushchev's promise of independence with a decree of neutrality, repudiation of the Warsaw Treaty and a request for United Nations protection. The Red Army invaded and Nagy paid with his life.¹⁸ The fantasy of equality, sovereignty

¹⁶N. Khrushchev, "Secret Speech on the "Cult of the Individual," delivered at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, February 25, 1956, in The Anti-Stalin Campaign and International Communism, op.cit., pp.2-89.

¹⁷The articles were also published in Kommunist No.9, June 30, pp. 15-26 in The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, Vol. IX, p. 14-24. The testament is included in Appendix A of this essay for convenience. The memorandum is included above on pp. 110-116.

¹⁸Theja Gunawardhena, Khrushchevism (Colombo, Ceylon: Swadeshi Printers, 1963)

and self-determination went up in the smoke rising from Budapest.

Tito, while heading for cover in the camp of the capitalist, bourgeois, imperialist exploiters of the West, told Khrushchev what he thought of his "new" doctrine.

"From the very beginning, we said that here it was not merely the question of the cult of personality but, rather, the question of a system which made the creation of the cult of personality possible, that it was necessary to strike at the roots unceasingly and persistently - and this is most difficult... ... The Soviet leaders had a different attitude toward other countries. They had certain wrong and defective views on relations with these countries - with Poland, Hungary and others."¹⁹

The 1957 world-wide conference of Communist Parties marked the return to unyielding doctrinal orthodoxy and both China and the U.S.S.R. condemned Tito.²⁰

After 1957, the maneuvering of the various Communist Parties became an incredible contest of one-ups-manship. Khrushchev's speech and the documents which were issued in 1956 had destroyed the C.P.S.U.'s legitimacy as the leader of the Communist World. If Lenin's analysis of Stalin was

¹⁹Dieter Dux, Ed., Ideology in Conflict (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1963) pp. 44-46

²⁰Declaration of the Conference of Representatives of Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist Countries, Moscow, November, 1957 (English translation in The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, IX:47, January 1, 1958, pp. 4-7) in Daniels, op.cit., pp. 270-273.

correct, the U.S.S.R. had been building something other than socialism or communism for thirty years. Theoretically, they were no more advanced than the most recent newcomers. China announced the "Great Leap Forward" in January of 1958 and followed this with the "Communes" in August of that year.²¹ The Chinese leadership declared that they would soon achieve "Communism". Khrushchev countered by pointing out that China lacked industry at the Twenty-First Party Congress in 1959 and declared the U.S.S.R. was entering the period of "all-out building of a Communist Society".²² The centrifugal forces which Khrushchev had encouraged proved strong and this type of ideological warfare has never ceased. Brezhnev's recent unifying efforts at the 1969 International Conference were hopeless from the be-

²¹Liu, "Report on the Work of the CCP Central Committee" delivered to the Second Session of the Eighth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, May 5, 1958 (official translation reprinted in Current Background, No. 507, June 2, 1958, pp. 7-13, 19-21, 23-25) in Daniels, op.cit., pp. 367-374.

Resolution of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, "On the Establishment of People's Communes in the Rural Areas", August 29, 1958 (English translation in Survey of China Mainland Press, U.S. Consulate-General, HongKong, No. 1853, September 15, 1958, pp. 1-2,4) in Daniels, op.cit., pp. 374-377.

²²N.Khrushchev, Political Report to the Twenty-First Congress of the CPSU, January, 1959 (English translation in U.S. Government, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report - Supplement: USSR and Eastern Europe, No. 3, 1959, pp. 95, 128-130, 132-34, 147, 157, 173-74, 176, 178, 180-81, 183) in Daniels, op.cit., pp. 273-281.

ginning.²³ He was even unable to obtain agreement on "Imperialism". The invasion of Czechoslovakia was a clear statement that his policies differ not in the least from those of Stalin or Khrushchev. The title of "Limited Sovereignty" aptly describes the situation to which Husak, the new Czechoslovak First Secretary, referred at the conference.

"Our experience in the past year and a half, the speaker went on, reaffirms the fact that the sovereignty of the Communist Parties and socialist countries includes the right of each to determine, in accordance with national conditions, the forms and methods of socialist construction, as well as its duty to be fully responsible to its people for this. However, the guaranteeing of the sovereignty of each party and socialist country at the same time obliges them to uphold and defend the power of the working class and all the working people and all the revolutionary gains of the socialist system. In this sense, the class content of the sovereignty of the socialist state is inextricably bound up with international responsibility to the commonwealth of socialist countries and the international Communist and revolutionary movement. Our own experience shows, he went on to say, that the slogan of sovereignty, stripped of its class content, is a refined and very effective weapon of the right-opportunist, revisionist and antisocialist forces. This happens when the party does not carry out a consistent Marxist-Leninist policy and fails to wage a resolute

²³The preparatory conference in 1968 did not go well. The only resolution which emerged was a declaration for a North Vietnam bombing halt. See World Marxist Review, Vol. 11, No. 4, April 1968 (Toronto, Canada: Progress Books) p. 5.

and consistent struggle in all spheres against any manifestations of bourgeois nationalism."²⁴

Rumania's foreign-news weekly Lumea aptly described what many of the Parties think about Brezhnev's doctrine.

"Limited Sovereignty makes no more sense than limited honesty."²⁵

Leonid Brezhnev's interpretation of Stalin's theory of independence and self-determination is superb but it will not unify international Communism. Nationalism has resulted in approximately four "brands" of communist regime and ideology.

1. Soviet
2. Chinese
3. Cuban
4. Yugoslav

The many variants and differences of opinion are evident from the following table.

²⁴G. Husak, First Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee, "Speech at the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties. (Pravda, June 13, pp. 1,4.) in The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, Vol. XXI, No. 27, July 30, 1959. Published by American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio State University)

²⁵Time The Weekly Newsmagazine, June 13, 1969, p. 30

THE WORLD'S COMMUNIST PARTIES

45,200,000 MEMBERS IN 88 PARTIES

Status: Ruling(14), Opposition(35), Outlawed(39)

Orientation: Moscow(39), Peking(5), Split(30), Independent or neutral(14)

Attending Summit: Delegate(67), Observer(2)

Lesotho, Puerto Rico, San Marino, West Berlin and two others also attending

Country	Members	Status	Orientation	Summit
AFGHANISTAN	400			
ALBANIA	66,327			
ALGERIA	900			
ARGENTINA	60,000			
AUSTRALIA	4,750			
AUSTRIA	27,500			
BELGIUM	12,500			
BOLIVIA	6,000			
BRAZIL	15,750			
BULGARIA	613,393			
BURMA	3,000			
CAMBODIA	100			
CANADA	2,500			
CEYLON	2,300			
CHILE	45,000			
CHINA	17,000,000			
COLOMBIA	9,000			
COSTA RICA	600			
CUBA	60,000			
CYPRUS	13,000			
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	1,700,000			
DENMARK	6,000			
DOMINICAN REP.	1,100			
ECUADOR	1,650			
EL SALVADOR	200			
FINLAND	49,000			
FRANCE	275,000			
GERMANY, EAST	1,769,912			
GERMANY, WEST	7,000			
GREECE	27,000			
GUADELOUPE	1,300			
GUATEMALA	750			
GUYANA	100			
HAITI	400			
HONDURAS	300			
HUNGARY	600,000			
ICELAND	1,000			
INDIA	125,000			
INDONESIA	5,000			
IRAN	1,000			
IRAQ	2,000			
IRELAND	125			
ISRAEL	2,000			
ITALY	1,500,000			

Country	Members	Status	Orientation	Summit
JAPAN	250,000			
JORDAN	700			
KOREA, NORTH	1,600,000			
LAOS	?			
LEBANON	6,000			
LUXEMBOURG	500			
MALAYSIA	2,000			
MARTINIQUE	700			
MEXICO	5,250			
MONGOLIA, OUTER	48,570			
MOROCCO	600			
NEPAL	8,000			
NETHERLANDS	11,500			
NEW ZEALAND	400			
NICARAGUA	200			
NIGERIA	900			
NORWAY	2,500			
PAKISTAN	1,450			
PANAMA	250			
PARAGUAY	5,000			
PERU	5,000			
PHILIPPINES	2,000			
POLAND	2,030,068			
PORTUGAL	2,000			
RÉUNION	500			
RUMANIA	1,800,000			
SINGAPORE	200			
SOUTH AFRICA	250			
SPAIN	5,000			
SUDAN	7,500			
SWEDEN	29,000			
SWITZERLAND	4,000			
SYRIA	3,000			
THAILAND	2,500			
TUNISIA	100			
TURKEY	1,250			
U.S.S.R.	13,500,000			
UNITED KINGDOM	35,562			
U.S.	13,000			
URUGUAY	21,000			
VENEZUELA	5,000			
VIET NAM, NORTH	766,000			
VIET NAM, SOUTH	?			
YUGOSLAVIA	1,013,500			

Largely compiled from U.S. Government sources.

TME Chart by R.M. Chapin, Jr.

Can anyone unify the communist camp? There are only two possibilities open. Absolute power and authority might achieve unification of the old Stalinist brand. However, China's size, population and demonstrated military abilities in conventional or guerilla warfare tend to indicate that Moscow cannot achieve dominance over Peking by force. Moscow's nuclear might precludes domination by Peking. The preponderance of force which the Western States could bring to bear on either of the contestants is an additional serious problem for any such plan. A Party conflict in either country which would result in a leadership more ready to accomodate the other also seems unlikely. Such ideological accomodations cannot be made so readily any longer because other Communist Parties immediately charge gross revisionism.

The second possibility, organization on a basis of equity is possible but both unlikely and of little worth to the communist camp. When Lenin founded the Party, his insistence on active promotion of revolution and on dedicated, professional revolutionaries meant that he was, in fact, instituting a quasi-military organization. In order for such a system to function efficiently it must be hierarchically organized. Otherwise, neither strategic nor tactical effectiveness can be assured. Such an organization can be achieved on a volitional basis only if there is unanimity

at all levels as to both goal and means. The second factor is obviously lacking among the various Communist Parties. A decentralized, fraternal system includes no guarantee of effectiveness for want of the same type of agreement.

For the non-communist nationalist, the fact that communism has shattered is only a partial solution to the threat of communist take-over in that the presence of several differing theories has caused "in country" party splits. The rift does not prevent either of the contesting giants or lesser parties from continuing their policies of subversion nor does it exclude the founding of entirely new regimes by local unanimous communists. Unfortunately, attempts to do so will continue. Marxist-Leninist Communism has proven to be a superb vehicle for seizing and retaining state power. It also confers some sort of questionable legitimacy on the totalitarian apparatus.

The true nationalist who fulfills the characteristics enumerated by Shafer cannot adopt the communist model. The previous discussion indicated that under a communist regime there is no provision for:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Territorial integrity | It is subject to annexation. |
| 2. Common culture | Internationalist culture according to the model of the dominant party is required and subject to change. |

- | | |
|--|---|
| 3. Social Institutions | Social institutions are limited to those receiving Party approval. Others are the residue of past ruling class superstructures. |
| 4. Sovereign government | Sovereignty is limited. |
| 5. Common history | Economic determinism dictates that history is accidental. It may also be revised by decree. |
| 6. Love for fellow nationals | Love does not involve purging nor class struggle. Placing fellow nationals under the direct threat of foreign intervention is not love. |
| 7. Devotion to the nation | The nation is bourgeois, temporary and subject to instrumental manipulation. |
| 8. Common pride in achievements | Achievements were accidental before socialism and due entirely to the initiative of the party after the revolution. |
| 9. Disregard for or hostility toward other like groups | Communism seems to be fulfilling this condition admirably at present. In the ideal Marxist model, hostility should not exist. |
| 10. Hope for a great and glorious national future. | The nation will cease to exist. |

There is one further consideration. Khrushchev's efforts to return to Leninism were a complete failure. Brezhnev's U.S.S.R. does not seem to be even attempting a reform. The absence of true Marxist-Leninism in the Great-Russian dominated apparatus

of the U.S.S.R. indicates that there is an urgent need to prevent Russian encroachments if true communism is to be achieved anywhere. Even China has experienced this problem. The local communist would seem well advised to accept a Western form of government as an interim measure since the various so-called communist regimes have proven woefully lacking in their ability to prevent outside interference. When the established regimes prove their mutual compatibility and economic differences among the various communist countries have ceased to exist because true, Marxist equality has been achieved, they should have such a preponderance of strength and, as Engels said, the beneficial exemplary force emitted by this new and marvelous state of affairs should be such that the revolutionary task will become immeasurably easier elsewhere. Early revolt and the subsequent pressures exerted by distorted Marxism can only lead to further nationalism which is also a distortion.

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO THE CONGRESS

I would urge strongly that at this Congress a number of changes be made in our political structure.

I want to tell you of the considerations to which I attach most importance.

At the head of the list I set an increase in the number of Central Committee members to a few dozen or even a hundred. It is my opinion that without this reform our Central Committee would be in great danger if the course of events were not quite favourable for us (and that is something we cannot count on).

Then, I intend to propose that the Congress should on certain conditions invest the decisions of the State Planning Commission with legislative force, meeting, in this respect, the wishes of Comrade Trotsky - to a certain extent and on certain conditions.

As for the first point, i.e., increasing the number of C.C. members, I think it must be done in order to raise the prestige of the Central Committee, to do a thorough job of improving our administrative machinery and to prevent conflict between small sections of the C.C. from acquiring excessive importance for the future of the Party.

It seems to me that our Party has every right to demand from the working class 50 to 100 C.C. members, and that it could get them from it without unduly taxing the resources of that class.

Such a reform would considerably increase the stability of our Party and ease its struggle in the encirclement of hostile states, which, in my opinion, is likely to, and must, become much more acute in the next few years. I think that the stability of our Party would gain a thousandfold by such a measure.

Lenin

December 23, 1922

Taken down by M. V.

Continuation of the notes.

December 24, 1922

By stability of the Central Committee, of which I spoke above, I mean measures against a split, as far as such measures can at all be taken. For, of course, the whiteguard in Russkaya Mysl (it seems to have been S.S. Oldenburg) was right when, first, in the whiteguards' game against Soviet Russia he

banked on a split in our Party, and when, secondly, he banked on grave differences in our Party to cause a split.

Our Party relies on two classes and therefore its instability would be possible and its downfall inevitable if there were no agreement between those two classes. In that event this or that measure, and generally all talk about the stability of our C.C., would be futile. No measures of any kind could prevent a split in such a case. But I hope that this is too remote a future and too improbable an event to talk about.

I have in mind stability as a guarantee against a split in the immediate future, and I intend to deal here with a few ideas concerning personal qualities.

I think that from this standpoint the prime factors in the question of stability are such members of the C.C. as Stalin and Trotsky. I think relations between them make up the greater part of the danger of a split, which could be avoided, and this purpose, in my opinion, would be served, among other things, by increasing the number of C.C. members to 50 or 100.

Comrade Stalin, having become Secretary-General, has unlimited authority concentrated in his hands, and I am not sure whether he will always be capable of using that authority with sufficient caution. Comrade Trotsky, on the other hand, as his struggle against the C.C. on the question of the People's Commissariat for Communications has already proved, is distinguished not only by outstanding ability. He is personally perhaps the most capable man in the present C.C., but he has displayed excessive self-assurance and shown excessive preoccupation with the purely administrative side of the work.

These two qualities of the two outstanding leaders of the present C.C. can inadvertently lead to a split, and if our Party does not take steps to avert this, the split may come unexpectedly.

I shall not give any further appraisals of the personal qualities of other members of the C.C. I shall just recall that the October episode with Zinoviev and Kamenev was, of course, no accident, but neither can the blame for it be laid upon them personally, any more than non-Bolshevism can upon Trotsky.

Speaking of the young C.C. members, I wish to say a few words about Bukharin and Pyatakov. They are, in my opinion, the most outstanding figures (among the youngest ones), and the following must be borne in mind about them: Bukharin is not only a most valuable and major theorist of the Party; he is also rightly considered the favourite of the whole Party, but his theoretical views can be classified as fully Marxist only with great reserve, for there is

something scholastic about him (he has never made a study of dialectics, and, I think, never fully understood it).

December 25. As for Pyatakov, he is unquestionably a man of outstanding will and outstanding ability, but shows too much zeal for administrating and the administrative side of the work to be relied upon in a serious political matter.

Both of these remarks, of course, are made only for the present, on the assumption that both these outstanding and devoted Party workers fail to find an occasion to enhance their knowledge and amend their one-sidedness.

Lenin

December 25, 1922

Taken down by M. V.

ADDITION TO THE LETTER OF DECEMBER 24, 1922

Stalin is too rude and this defect, although quite tolerable in our midst and in dealings among us Communists, becomes intolerable in a Secretary-General. That is why I suggest that the comrades think about a way of removing Stalin from that post and appointing another man in his stead who in all other respects differs from Comrade Stalin in having only one advantage, namely, that of being more tolerant, more loyal, more polite and more considerate to the comrades, less capricious, etc. This circumstance may appear to be a negligible detail. But I think that from the standpoint of safeguards against a split and from the standpoint of what I wrote above about the relationship between Stalin and Trotsky it is not a detail, or it is a detail which can assume decisive importance.

Lenin

Taken down by L.F.

January 4, 1923

Continuation of the notes.

December 26, 1922

The increase in the number of C.C. members to 50 or even 100 must, in my opinion, serve a double or even a treble purpose: the more members there are in the C.C., the more men will be trained in C.C. work and the less danger there will be of a split due to some indiscretion. The enlistment of many workers to the C.C. will help the workers to improve our administrative machinery, which is pretty bad. We inherited it, in effect, from the old regime, for it was absolutely impossible to reorganise it in such a short time, especially in conditions of war, famine, etc. That is why those "critics" who point to the defects of our administra-

tive machinery out of mockery or malice may be calmly answered that they do not in the least understand the conditions of the revolution today. It is altogether impossible in five years to reorganise the machinery adequately, especially in the conditions in which our revolution took place. It is enough that in five years we have created a new type of state in which the workers are leading the peasants against the bourgeoisie; and in a hostile international environment this in itself is a gigantic achievement. But knowledge of this must on no account blind us to the fact that, in effect, we took over the old machinery of state from the tsar and the bourgeoisie and that now, with the onset of peace and the satisfaction of the minimum requirements against famine, all our work must be directed towards improving the administrative machinery.

I think that a few dozen workers, being members of the C.C., can deal better than anybody else with checking, improving and remodelling our state apparatus. The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection on whom this function devolved at the beginning proved unable to cope with it and can be used only as an "appendage" or, on certain conditions, as an assistant to these members of the C.C. In my opinion, the workers admitted to the Central Committee should come preferably not from among those who have had long service in Soviet bodies (in this part of my letter the term workers everywhere includes peasants), because those workers have already acquired the very traditions and the very prejudices which it is desirable to combat.

The working-class members of the C.C. must be mainly workers of a lower stratum than those promoted in the last five years to work in Soviet bodies; they must be people closer to being rank-and-file workers and peasants, who, however, do not fall into the category of direct or indirect exploiters. I think that by attending all sittings of the C.C. and all sittings of the Political Bureau, and by reading all the documents of the C.C., such workers can form a staff of devoted supporters of the Soviet system, able, first, to give stability to the C.C. itself, and second, to work effectively on the renewal and improvement of the state apparatus.

Lenin

Taken down by L.F.
December 26, 1922

*Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 36, pp. 593-597

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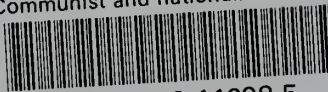
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